Ermita, peace emissary, appointed defense chief

Story below, COL. 1

Still a waiting game for Kuratong Baleleng

THE ANTICIPATION over the supposed issuance of the Supreme Court ruling on the controversial Kuratong Baleleng case yesterday remained exactly that.

According to clerk of court Luzviminda Puno, the tribunal did not calendar the case in its en banc session, which is normally held every Tuesday. She did not say if the case would be calendared for

STILL/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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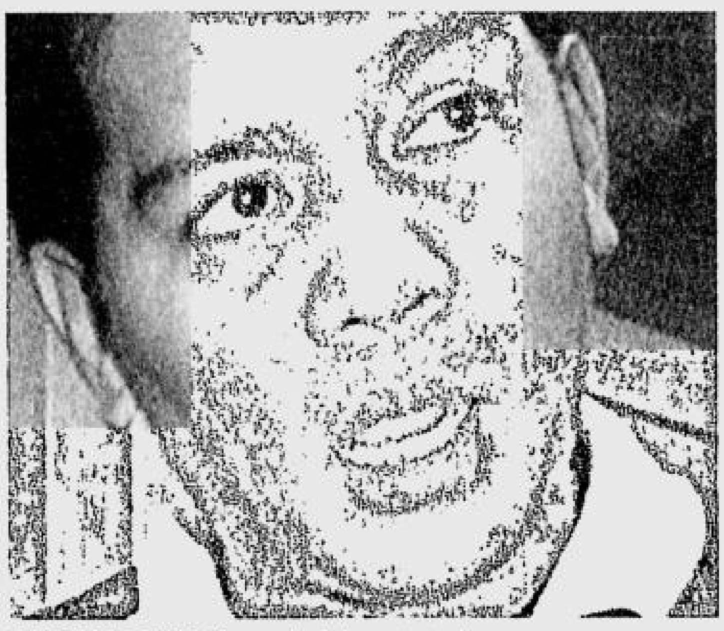


JOEY MARQUEZ: Please don't invent stories. PDI PHOTO FILE

Kris-Joey split started with a text message

By Nini Valera, Alcuin Papa and Marinel Cruz

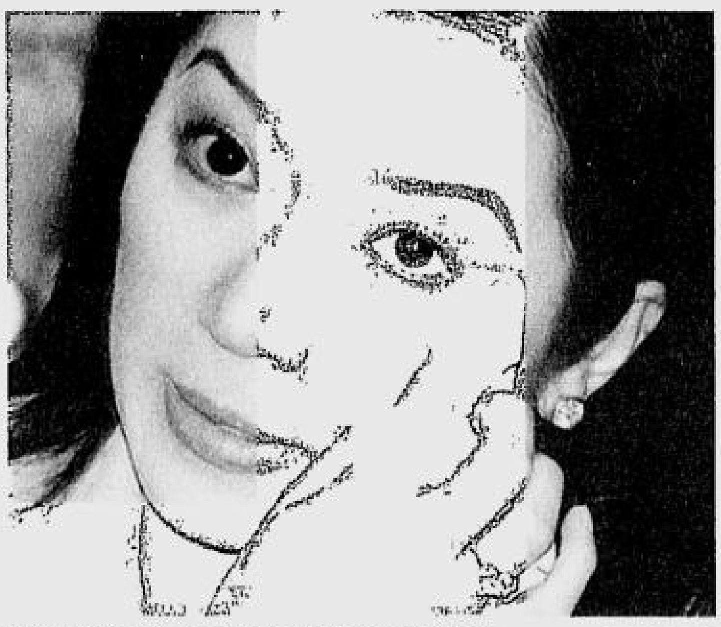
ONCE again, Kris Aquino loved and lost, and went home to mommy in tears and "shaking all over."

"The Aquino family is fully, solidly behind her," a spokesperson of former President Cory Aquino issued a terse statement to the INQUIRER yesterday after news broke out about the end of the love affair between her youngest daughter, popular television host Kris Aquino, and Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez.

The Kris-Joey love story ended yesterday at the headquarters of the Philippine National Police with allegations of "physical violence" and "emotional terrorism."

Kris went to the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) unit at around 3:30 p.m. yesterday together with lawyer Raymond Fortun and her brother

KRIS-JOEY/ A20



KRIS AQUINO goes home to Mommy in tears. PDI PHOTO FILE

GMA running 'done deal'

'God being abused' bothers bishop

By Jerome Aning

A CATHOLIC bishop believes that President Macapagal-Arroyo already knows God's wish for her.

"Personally, I believe God has spoken to her long ago so there's no need to wait anymore," Dagupan-Lingayen Archbishop Oscar Cruz said yesterday.

Cruz said he was bothered because in December last year, Ms Macapagal also credited a message from God for her decision not to stand for election next year. "My only regret is that God is being abused. God is not that fickle-minded," he said.

The President is said to be waiting for divine guidance on whether she would run in the presidential election in May.

GOD/ A10

GOD and guns may have firmed up the decision of President Macapagal to go for the presidency. On Monday, she visits the 4th Infantry Battalion, 1st Infantry Division in Sitio DK, Libertad, Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibugay. EDWIN BACASMAS

'She would forsake country if she didn't'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

ALL SIGNS point to it. And she doesn't want an abbreviated term of three years as a transition President but a full term of six.

"Based on the theme and mood (of the Palace statements), *tuloy-tuloy na ang pagtakbo*," Jose Ma. Rufino, presidential political liaison officer, said yesterday.

He said the statements of Ignacio Bunye, the President's spokesperson, the past two days indicated that the President's candidacy was a done deal.

Bunye the other day said the President was seriously thinking about suggestions from party mates and business leaders for her to run, and was "praying very hard for guidance."

Bunye issued another statement yesterday defending the possibility of Ms Macapagal joining the presidential race in May.

"The nation is undergoing extraordinary circumstances and it is but natural for any national leader to weigh the options of service, sacrifice and responsibility," he said in a statement titled "A leader's options."

"Although this decision is entirely in the hands of the President

GMA/ A10

Despite big chill, GMA appoints Guingona caretaker

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

DESPITE rumors of increasingly chilly relations, President Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed Vice President Teofisto Guingona as Malacañang caretaker for the duration of her 5-day working visit to New York, Paris and Rome.

Ricardo Saludo, deputy spokesperson for the President, said her decision was intended to "put to rest all speculation" of a widening gap between the country's highest ranking officials. "[They] have a good working relationship marked by respect and cordiality. The Palace has never given credence to allegations of a rift between the two," he said at a briefing.

Just an hour before Guingona's appointment was announced at 4 p.m., Saludo hinted that the President might name Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo as caretaker, "as she has done in the past."

Saludo subsequently said that Romulo would still be handling state affairs on a day-to-day basis, and that other matters needing Ms Macapagal's full authority would be forwarded to the Vice President.

Aside from finalizing the matter of who would serve as custodian in her absence, the President put government troops in Metro Manila on "special alert," as part

DESPITE/ A8

EDUARDO ERMITA: Psy-war expert who wears many hats. PDI PHOTO FILE

Skilled peace negotiator named new defense chief

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A RETIRED general who wears many hats in the Macapagal administration is the new defense secretary.

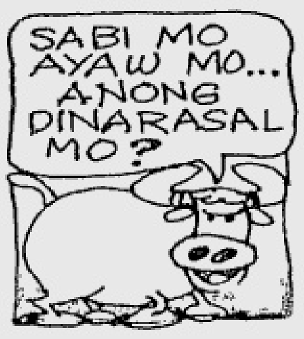
As expected, President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Eduardo Ermita, her chief adviser on the peace process with Moro and communist rebels, as defense secretary effective yesterday.

Ermita, 68, replaced Angelo Reyes, who resigned last month following a failed military mutiny on July 27 by about 300 officers demanding reforms in the military.

Ms Macapagal made known her choice in a meeting with senior Palace officials a day before she leaves today for a five-day trip to the United States and Europe. Ermita was chosen over Sen. Ramon Magsaysay and former Social Security System head Renato Valencia.

There was no announcement on who would take over Ermita's

SKILLED/ A9



SABI MO AYAW MO... ANONG DINARASAL MO?

GMA told: It's a sin to tell a lie

By Cynthia D. Balana and Martin P. Marfil

"THOU shall not lie."

Deputy Minority Leader Rolex Suplico yesterday reminded President Macapagal-Arroyo of one of the precepts of the 10 Command-

GMA/ A10

Leaks prompt high court to order new bar exams

THE SUPREME Court has confirmed a leak in last Sunday's bar examination on Mercantile Law and has ordered its nullification.

In an en banc resolution, the SC ordered the holding of another examination on the subject on Oct. 4, a Saturday, at 8 p.m. at the De La Salle University. The resolution was "without prejudice to any further action the court may take on the matter."

Justice Jose Vitug, chair of the 2003 bar examinations committee, confirmed the existence of the leakage and recommended the nullification of the examination on mercantile law.

Mercantile law accounts for 15 percent in the total grade for the bar.

"The Supreme Court decided to annul the (test in mercantile law) to preserve the integrity and protect the sanctity of the said examination and avoid any doubt or suspicion on the outcome of the examination," Vitug announced during a press conference.

Vitug said he got wind of the leak on the evening after the mercantile law examinations, and was able to confirm it the follow-

LEAKS/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/09/24/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Hunt for Al-Ghozi takes backseat

ASSEMBLY TIME

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople shakes hands with his American counterpart, US Secretary of State Colin Powell, on Monday at the United Nations in New York City where hundreds of world leaders and diplomats have come for the UN General Assembly. President Macapagal-Arroyo will address the assembly on Sept. 25.

GETTY IMAGES

Gov't to give priority to peace with MILF

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Julie S. Alipala, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

THE HUNT for fugitive Indonesian terrorist Fathur Roman al-Ghozi would now have to take a backseat so as not to jeopardize the impending resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

"The hunt for Al-Ghozi will continue in the sidelines of our advancing peace and development initiatives in Mindanao," Ms Macapagal told soldiers of the 4th Infantry Battalion based in Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibugay.

The President flew to Mindanao on Monday to personally oversee the manhunt for Al-Ghozi who was reportedly sighted in the Zamboanga peninsula. She was briefed by the military on the search for the self-confessed bomber who is still at large.

Ms Macapagal ordered the military to intensify the hunt for Al-Ghozi but stressed that the peace process must not be harmed.

Talks resumption

The peace talks to end the three-decade separatist conflict are expected to resume in Kuala Lumpur next month under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) with Malaysia as host.

Ms Macapagal will discuss the peace process with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in New York this week when they attend a meeting of the UN General Assembly. Mahathir convinced Ms Macapagal to restart talks during a brief meeting in Tokyo in May.

Formal peace talks between the government and the separatist MILF was stalled in late 2001 and nearly collapsed in February when the army overran a major rebel complex in Mindanao.

The MILF has expressed concern that the manhunt for Al-Ghozi might result in a full-scale war between soldiers and MILF fighters.

Al-Ghozi, a member of the Islamic militant network Jemaah Isyamiyah and accused of masterminding bombings that killed 22 people in Manila in December 2000, escaped from a Camp Crame jail in mid-July.

Pretext to attack

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said the military operation against Al-Ghozi was being conducted near MILF areas in the Zamboanga peninsula, triggering suspicions that the army was using the hunt for the Indonesian militant as a pretext to attack rebel positions in central Mindanao. A ceasefire has been holding since August.

Kabalu warned that once violence go full-scale, the volatile peace process would abruptly end.

Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division based in Pulacan town, said the President was merely protecting the peace process, a proof her government was sincere in ending the decades-old Moro rebellion in the country.

"The most important thrust of the government is the peace process with the MILF, but it does not mean that we will stop our operation against Al-Ghozi. The search and hunt continue," Salazar said.

Coddled by MILF?

But Task Force Ranao commander Brig. General Francisco Gudani admitted that the hunt for Al-Ghozi might be difficult to pursue because "he is being coddled inside an MILF camp."

"And with that, we are restrained due to the ongoing negotiation and in this situation, we cannot undertake offensive operation, only active defense posture," he said.

In Manila, AFP chief of staff Gen. Narciso Abaya said Al-Ghozi was believed to be near Tungawan and there had been intelligence reports that "armed men are escorting him."

He did not say which group the escorts could belong to, but the military has already said the fugitive could have the protection of the 12,500-strong Muslim separatist MILF, also in the area.

MILF spokespersons have denied that the group is harboring Al-Ghozi and have charged that the dragnet for Al-Ghozi is merely a pretext for the military to go after MILF fighters despite its ceasefire with the government. *With wire reports*

Ping: I had one house, not 8

By Christine O. Avendaño

OPPOSITION Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday said he bought only one house in the United States, not eight as his detractors alleged.

Lacson said he bought the house at 1011 Laguna Seca Loop, Chula Vista, California, in 1966, and sold it that same year to his brother, Ernani. The house was now owned by a Pilar H. Diemer, he said.

The senator issued a statement on the issue yesterday and cancelled a scheduled news conference.

In his statement, Lacson cited records from the website of CourthouseDirect.com in naming other people as owners of the seven more houses that Jesus Santos, lawyer for First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, earlier attributed to him.

He said the house at 2305 Sea Island Place, Chula Vista, California, also belonged to his brother, Ernani and sister-in-law, Perceviranda; 14300 Terra Bella street 73, Panorama City, California, was owned by Ricardo G. So and Rosalinda Tiu; 2252 Mountain Ridge Road, Chula Vista, California, by Felix M. Sablan and Margarita G. Sablan; 14300 Terra Bella street 60, Panorama City, California, by Noemi Sanchez; 3005 E Plaza Boulevard, National City, California, by Sylvia D. Cruz; 2295 California street, San Francisco, California, by Friedman Trust; and 3530 Locust Avenue, Long Beach California, by Jill Petoniak.

Yet another lie, Lacson said, was the claim that he and his wife, Alice, had $1.19 million in their US bank account. "What they did was add up all the deposits and bank transfers regardless of previous withdrawals, to come up with a staggering sum of $1.19 million," the senator said.

Santos' retort: "Take it up with the US government."

The lawyer said the US assets were all identified by the US Financial Crimes and Enforcement Network (Fincen).

"We are glad that Sen. Panfilo Lacson is now admitting that he owned one of these houses and that the six US bank accounts are indeed real," Santos pointed out. "That is a big shift from his previous statement that he (did) not have any hidden US assets during his tenure as senior Philippine National Police official."

LACSON

Santos said the reports on which their allegations against Lacson were based, were from "credible" sources. "Unlike the senator from Cavite, we have provided the media with copies of the sources of our information."

Cardinal in retirement: Shepherd with no flock

By Jerome Aning

WHEN he retires, outgoing Manila archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin can still continue exercising his priestly functions, but he will be sharing the limelight with his successor, Lipa archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, in making statements about important issues affecting society.

Fr. James Reuter, head of the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines' National Office of Mass Media, said that with Sin's retirement, the cardinal is like a shepherd without a flock.

"He can say a mass, he can ordain, he can do everything [that a priest does]. It's just that he doesn't have the authority over a terrain or over a definite (group of) people," he explained to reporters.

Reuter said as the leader of the most influential Roman Catholic archdiocese in the country, many people, including politicians, would also go to Rosales to ask blessing or to consult with him.

"I think his door will be wide open just like Sin's. He would receive those who really want a blessing—people like former President Corazon Aquino," Reuter said.

Sin can also no longer issue pastoral statements in his capacity as archbishop emeritus. Reuter said he thinks Rosales, "being a very good man, will be very careful about any statement that he makes."

But what would life be like for Sin once he retires? Sin and Rosales' staff are waiting for the latter's arrival from Rome—sometime early next month—to begin preparations for the turnover, with topics ranging from where the two prelates will be living to the changing of letterheads.

One sure sign of the change is the removal of Sin's episcopal coat of arms, containing his motto "Serviam (I Serve)." Rosales will have to redesign a new coat of arms that may contain his motto, "Si mortuum fuerit, frutum affert (If it dies, it yields much fruit)."

Peachy Yamsuan, head of the archdiocese's office of communications, said "everything would have to begin at Rosales' instance" since Sin, after his resignation was accepted by the Vatican, is now only a mere apostolic administrator of the archdiocese—technically a caretaker.

Yamsuan said the eleven vicars general, episcopal vicars and assistant episcopal vicars appointed by Sin to help him run day-to-day affairs automatically lost their jobs when Sin resigned.

Solons to take Cha-cha to people

By Carlito Pablo

WHEN Charter change is blocked by an immovable obstacle like senators, what should congressmen do next?

"We will take the fight to the grassroots," Rep. Gilbert Teodoro Jr. (NPC, Tarlac) said.

Teodoro said the House is helping put up a "broad-based coalition" that would push for amendments to the 1987 Constitution. The ultimate goal is a full shift to the parliamentary form of government in 2007, with a transition president elected in 2004 to serve a three-year term.

Latest conversation

Citing his latest conversation with Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., prime mover of Charter change, Teodoro, said the coalition would include Bro. Mike Velarde's El Shaddai organization and Bro. Eddie Villanueva's Jesus is Lord Movement.

A Malacañang source who asked not to be identified earlier said the Iglesia ni Cristo "may support the movement." The same source said the mainstream Roman Catholic Church was expected to echo the call for Charter change.

De Venecia himself vowed there would be a "breakthrough" in the issue next month.

Senators led by Senate President Franklin Drilon have torpedoed the latest House initiative to convene both chambers of Congress into a constituent assembly.

"We want to assure senators that Charter change is the will of the people," Teodoro said. "It's their electorate speaking."

In an interview a few days ago, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez (NP, Iloilo City) said a "massive push" for Charter reforms will commence early October.

Yesterday, Gonzalez said: "Right now, senators are holding the country hostage."

Charter change proponents have argued that if constitutional reforms were not effected before the 2004 polls, the same reforms would again have to wait until 2010.

'Self-importance'

"They [senators] are acting out of self-importance," Gonzalez said. "I appeal to (their) statesmanship."

Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) noted that congressmen were not the only ones pushing for Constitutional amendments. He said the sentiment was shared by local government officials and business groups.

"Their [senators'] hard-headedness is the best argument for a unicameral form of government," Nograles said. "They will have to answer to the people."

Teodoro, Gonzalez and Nograles—all lawyers—explained that in a constituent assembly, senators and congressmen would vote separately. This was in reference to apprehensions that, in the proposed setup, the 22 senators would be drowned out by the 220 congressmen.

Nograles noted that the House had "bent backwards and even somersaulted" by agreeing to the separate voting.

But there's resistance within the House, too.

Independent Rep. Ted Failon of Leyte yesterday urged De Venecia and other like-minded congressmen to stop insisting on Cha-cha. The proposal was "as good as doomed," Failon said.

'Pangasinan express'

De Venecia's "Pangasinan express" style of pushing for choice legislation without substantial debate and study was not going to work in the Senate, Failon added. "It really takes two to Cha-cha, and the Senate is not dancing."

The House should focus on more important legislation, the Leyte solon said. He suggested measures against the controversial power purchase adjustment (PPA) rates in electric bills, and the pending P125 across-the-board wage increase.

"*Yung dapat unahin, ayaw unahin. Yung walang pag-asang gawin, yun ang inuuna* (He insists on doing what is hopeless, not what should be done first)," Failon said. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana*

No more phone sex

HERE'S bad news for phone sex afficionados, particularly those with secret fantasies for sexy stars Patricia Javier and Joyce Jimenez.

Telecom giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday said it had already stopped offering the premium "hotline" services featuring the two screen sirens.

"Phone cards bearing the images of Patricia Javier and Joyce Jimenez are likewise no longer being distributed by PLDT to its major dealers," PLDT said in a statement.

In a letter to National Telecommunications Commission chief Armi Jane Borje dated Sept. 10, PLDT vice president for retail and marketing Joaquin San Agustin disclosed that the dominant carrier has already terminated its "hotline" for Joyce Jimenez on May 30 and the two "hotlines" for Patricia Javier on April 21 and Aug. 2, respectively.

"PLDT management sees no valid reason for the media assault of (Marinduque Rep. Edmund) Reyes Jr. against the company, as well as his call for an investigation. *Abigail L. Ho*

Palace to enforce Marcos loot ruling

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE PHILIPPINE government will proceed to enforce the July decision of the Supreme Court on the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses regardless of opposition from foreign courts, Malacañang said yesterday.

"We will enforce the decision of the Supreme Court and petition relevant financial institutions to turn over to the Philippine government, as awarded by the Supreme Court, the contested Marcos wealth," deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo said.

The Supreme Court ruled in July that some $683 million in Marcos Swiss bank deposits were ill-gotten and ordered them forfeited in favor of the Philippine government. The family of the late strongman has appealed the decision and the funds remain in escrow with the Philippine National Bank (PNB) until the high court rules with finality.

But early this month, Hawaii District Court Judge Manuel Real issued a ruling stopping the transfer of the Marcos ill-gotten wealth to the Philippines as ruled by the Supreme Court and threatened banks that did so.

The order is a result of a 1990s ruling by the US court awarding nearly $2 billion in damages against the Marcos estate to several thousand human rights victims of the Marcos regime.

Apparently in compliance with the US court ruling, the Singapore branch of West LB AG, a German bank, which is holding $22 million, refused last week to release the funds until a Singapore court makes a ruling on how it should be disposed.

"We maintain that the decision of a foreign court cannot carry weight in our country," Saludo said in a briefing yesterday. He was referring to Real's court ruling.

Saludo said there was no contradiction between the position of Malacañang and the Presidential Commission on Good Government, which has moved to appeal the "global injunction" issued by Real against the transfer of 26 Marcos-owned bank accounts in Switzerland to the Philippines.

He said it is the duty of the PCGG, the agency tasked to recover the Marcos ill-gotten wealth, to exhaust all legal measures to get the Marcos loot.

"And if the PCGG feels that making representations within the US judicial system will be helpful, then they are empowered to do that and Malacañang supports them in all their effort to recover the Marcos wealth," Saludo said.

PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza, said there appeared to be a "cross-border attempt" by Marcos lawyers to prevent the Swiss funds from being returned to Manila. *With AFP report*

Footloose Imelda allowed to travel

By Armand N. Nocum

FORMER First Lady Imelda Marcos has secured the Sandiganbayan's permission to go on a month-long trip to the United States and Europe.

She was seeking eye treatment in the United States, Imelda said, and from there she would visit pilgrimage sites in France, Portugal and Italy.

The Sandigan's fourth division headed by Associate Justice Gregory Ong granted the appeal on the grounds that Imelda's Filipino eye doctor had recommended the consultation with an American specialist, and the Supreme Court had earlier "held that (her) right to travel is guaranteed by the Constitution."

Imelda, 74-year-old widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, is facing 10 counts of corruption charges and 33 counts of dollar smuggling in connection with the family's ill-gotten wealth amounting to $683 million, recently forfeited by the Supreme Court in favor of the government. She was allowed to travel to the United States for similar treatment in 2000 and 2001.

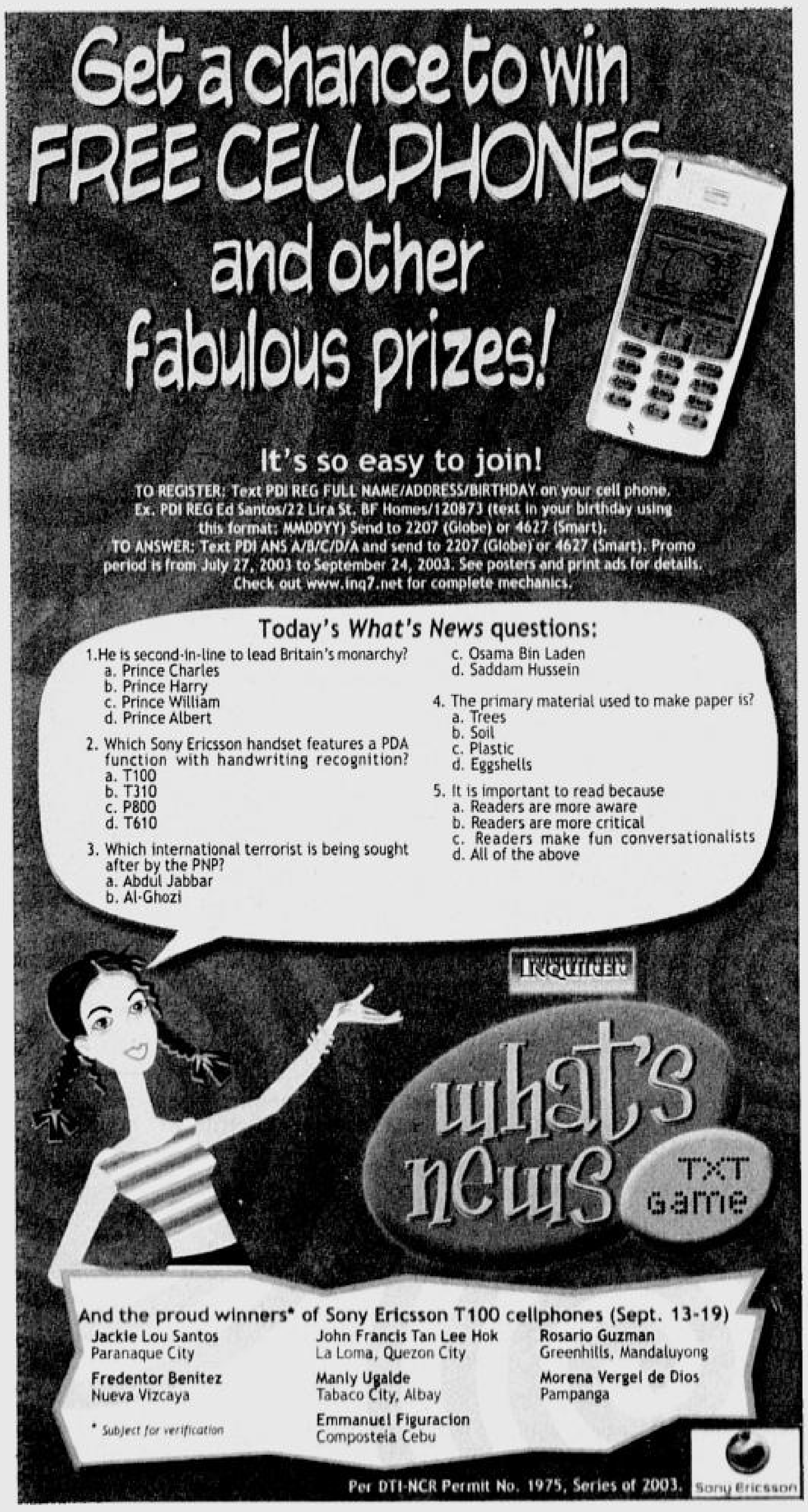
Justice Rodolfo Palattao, who penned the decision, cited the "necessity" of this next trip, so that Imelda could be further treated for glaucoma, a blinding disease, on the suggestion of her physician, Dr. Manuel Agulto.

Palattao said it was Agulto's expressed opinion that there were better facilities in the United States to cure the "rare" affliction, which reportedly gave the Marcos widow "recurring headaches."

The permit to travel was granted amid strong opposition from government prosecutors, who insisted that there were several "equally competent" Philippine doctors that Mrs. Marcos could consult.

Imelda is scheduled to see eye specialist Dr. Richard J. Simmons in the United States and then she will proceed to the shrines of Our Lady of Lourdes in France and Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal. Before flying home, she will spend five days in the Vatican.

The court asked Imelda to leave the country not earlier than Sept. 26 and return not later than Oct. 26. She was also required to post a travel bond of P140,000.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Today's *What's News* questions:

1. He is second-in-line to lead Britain's monarchy?
   a. Prince Charles
   b. Prince Harry
   c. Prince William
   d. Prince Albert
2. Which Sony Ericsson handset features a PDA function with handwriting recognition?
   a. T100
   b. T310
   c. P800
   d. T610
3. Which international terrorist is being sought after by the PNP?
   a. Abdul Jabbar
   b. Al-Ghozi
   c. Osama Bin Laden
   d. Saddam Hussein
4. The primary material used to make paper is?
   a. Trees
   b. Soil
   c. Plastic
   d. Eggshells
5. It is important to read because
   a. Readers are more aware
   b. Readers are more critical
   c. Readers make fun conversationalists
   d. All of the above

And the proud winners* of Sony Ericsson T100 cellphones (Sept. 13-19)

Jackie Lou Santos
Paranaque City

Fredentor Benitez
Nueva Vizcaya

John Francis Tan Lee Hok
La Loma, Quezon City

Manly Ugalde
Tabaco City, Albay

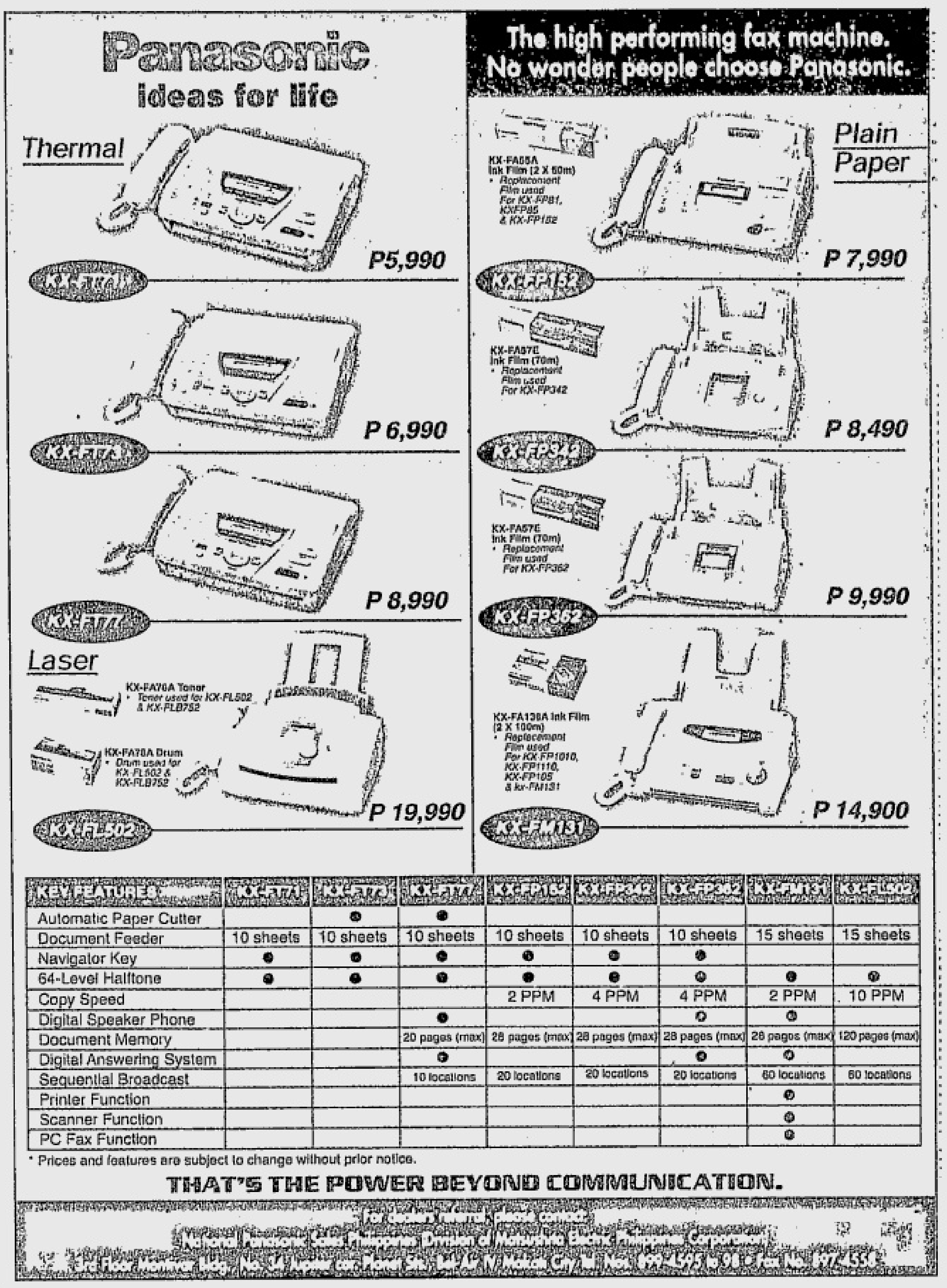
Emmanuel Figuracion
Compostela Cebu

Rosario Guzman
Greenhills, Mandaluyong

Morena Vergel de Dios
Pampanga

* Subject for verification

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1975, Series of 2003. Sony Ericsson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KX-FL502
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KX-FP152
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Replacement Film used For KX-FP342
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Document Feeder	10 sheets	10 sheets	10 sheets	10 sheets	10 sheets	10 sheets	15 sheets	15 sheets
Navigator Key	●	●	●	●	●	●		
64-Level Halftone	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Copy Speed				2 PPM	4 PPM	4 PPM	2 PPM	10 PPM
Digital Speaker Phone			●			●	●	
Document Memory			20 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	120 pages (max)
Digital Answering System			●			●	●	
Sequential Broadcast			10 locations	20 locations	20 locations	20 locations	60 locations	60 locations
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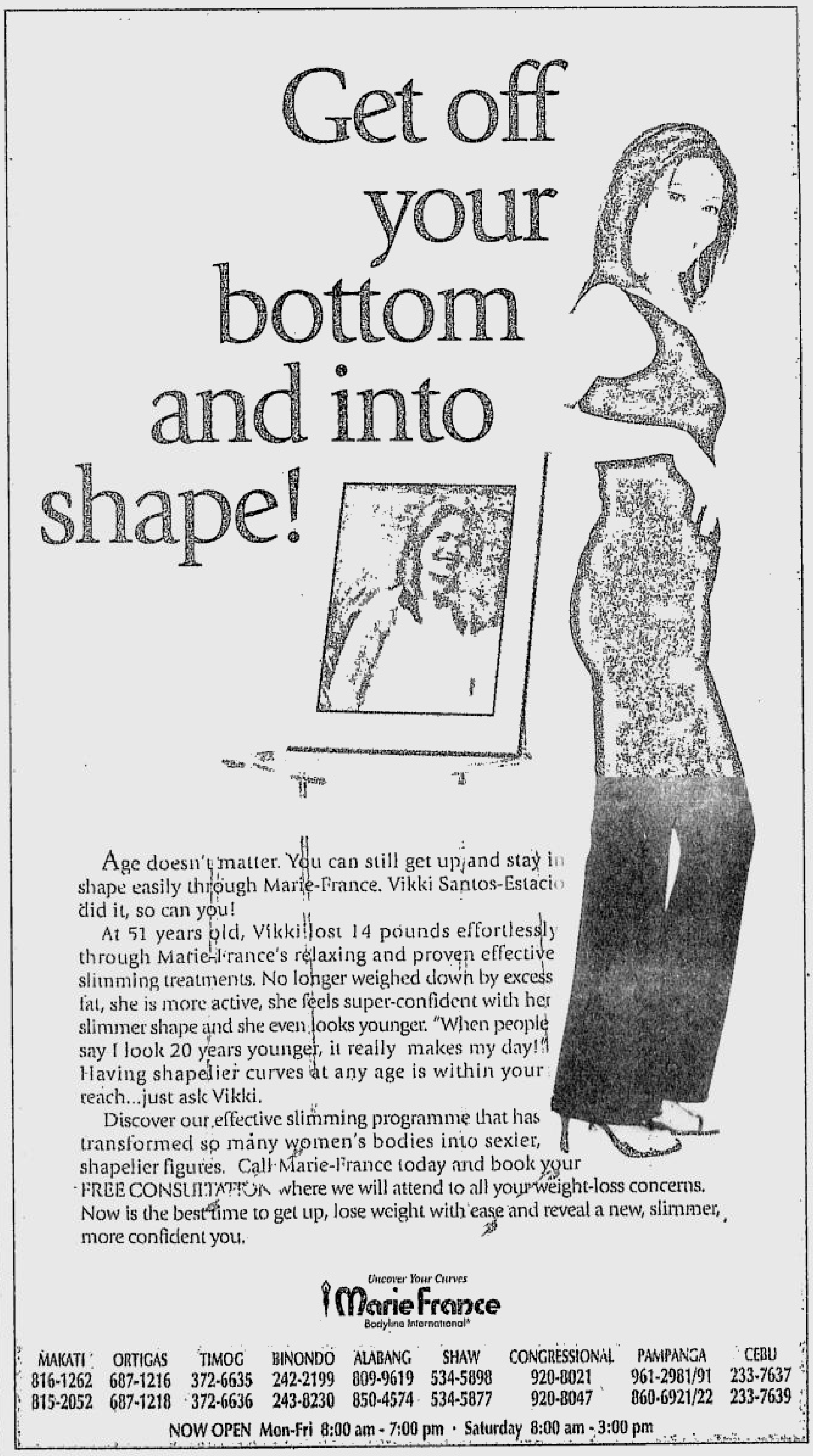
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Drive against corruption: All hype, no bite?

"DON'T steal. The government hates competition."

The bumper sticker spotted on a Manila street is a reminder of two things—elections are coming to the Philippines next May and the level of cynicism is as high as ever.

It has been nearly two decades since Imelda Marcos' enormous shoe collection thrust corruption in the Philippines into the world spotlight.

Much has changed. But the vibrant democracy barely disguises the fact that corruption remains a festering sore for Filipinos and foreign investors in a country where businesses routinely add 20 percent in bribes for government contracts.

Sheila Coronel, executive director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, said the government—even with the best intentions—does not have the resources or power to launch the necessary all-out attack on corruption.

"The bureaucracy has had a history of riding out administrations," she said. "They know they will be there for a long time, whereas presidents will only be there six years."

Graft watchdog Transparency International ranks the Philippines as Asia's fourth-worst in terms of perceptions of corruption, on a par with Pakistan.

Armed robberies

And the need for money—for both government candidates and the opposition—is getting more intense as local, congressional and presidential elections scheduled in May 2004 near.

A brazen daylight raid by armed men on Citibank's main branch in Manila last month was one of a rash of recent bank robberies that are widely seen as attempts to bankroll campaigns.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who vaulted from vice president after graft allegations brought down Joseph Estrada in 2001, has said she will not run next year. But many believe she is merely biding her time before declaring her candidacy.

Ms Macapagal has launched a high-profile drive to stamp out corruption in the bureaucracy, particularly the notoriously lax customs and tax departments.

But even she concedes that the problems are deep-rooted.

And her own image as a graftbuster is in danger from allegations by an opposition senator that her husband Mike squirreled away hundreds of millions in campaign funds.

"Lifestyle checks" are being carried out on officials who may have too many flashy cars or holiday homes for their salaries.

'Way of life'

Tax evasion, which has become a way of life, is also in the President's sights. Teams of investigators in red T-shirts swoop on shops to check whether they are issuing receipts.

"I've never seen it in my whole life until recently," said Johnny Co, country head for ANZ Bank.

Economists are impressed by the marked improvement in tax revenues this year, which has also translated into a budget deficit that seems to be under far more control than in 2002.

"If you look at the revenue outcome this year, it's clear that something has happened," said one financial diplomat, who asked not to be identified.

"There is certainly a long distance to go."

Blubbery

But many question whether Ms Macapagal's anti-graft campaign has real bite or is aimed more at winning over voters who are clearly sick of widespread corruption and blubbery bureaucracy.

"Lifestyle checks alone will not solve corruption in the bureaucracy," said Coronel, winner of this year's Magsaysay Award for Journalism and Literature.

"It's a very good way of getting publicity and generating awareness about the problems in the bureaucracy, but you need a systemic approach."

Ms Macapagal's task is nothing less than changing a culture where public office has long been seen as a ticket to personal wealth.

Little changed

The prevailing philosophy seems little changed since Jose Avelino, Senate president in the 1950s, remarked famously: "We are not angels! What are we in power for?"

Most people who have done business in the Philippines for any length of time remain skeptical that Ms Macapagal is doing any more than scratching the surface.

"It's like stopping polluting buses and jeepneys," said one foreign businessman, referring to the hulking public transport vehicles modelled on US army jeeps that rumble through Manila's smog-choked streets.

"They stop about 50 in one day and say 'Wow, we made a big catch today.' But then nothing happens for the next six months." Optimists can at least point to the fact that there is no lack of outrage about corruption, especially among the millions of poor it hurts most—notwithstanding election hand-outs of a few pesos or a some handfuls of rice for a vote.

At a recent anticorruption protest, around 1,000 protesters vented their frustration by bringing traffic to a halt with a noisy march through Manila's business district.

"We are here to express outrage with the only weapons we have—our bodies and voices, our pots and pans," said Milette Morante, a spokesperson for the protesters.

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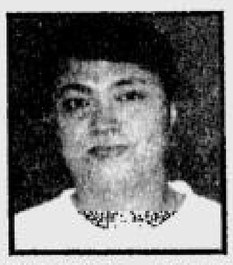

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US cargo carriers' legality in doubt as 'open skies' looms

THE UNITED States missed a rare opportunity to legitimize the questionable status of its cargo carriers at the Clark and Subic airports ahead of the Oct. 1 implementation of "open skies" with the Philippines, the president of the Save Our Skies (SOS) movement said yesterday.

A Philippine proposal for joint operations, first broached during the recent round of air talks between the two sides, would have provided legal cover for the so-called seventh freedom operations of United Parcel Service (UPS) out of Clark and Federal Express in Subic, said SOS president Robert Lim Joseph in a press statement.

But the US side turned down the offer, holding out for an all-or-nothing deal that never materialized, SOS noted.

Currently, both US carriers fly direct to neighboring Asian countries from their respective bases in Central Luzon, a right not granted by the current RP-US air services treaty. It is also constitutionally questionable, said Joseph, quoting aviation law experts.

Such arrangement, it said, was being tolerated by the Philippine government merely as a goodwill gesture but it also wants Washington to resolve the issue before the open skies provisions of the treaty come into effect on Oct. 1.

The issue on the legality of the US cargo flights has sent both UPS and FedEx scurrying for solutions, even talking of a pullout from the country.

Seventh freedom confers on an airline the privilege of flying to and from other countries exclusively out of another country, that is, without connections in the carrier's home state.

Such entitlement is extremely valuable to beneficiary airlines as it gives them basing rights in the granting country. However, it is rarely bestowed in international aviation, according to experts.

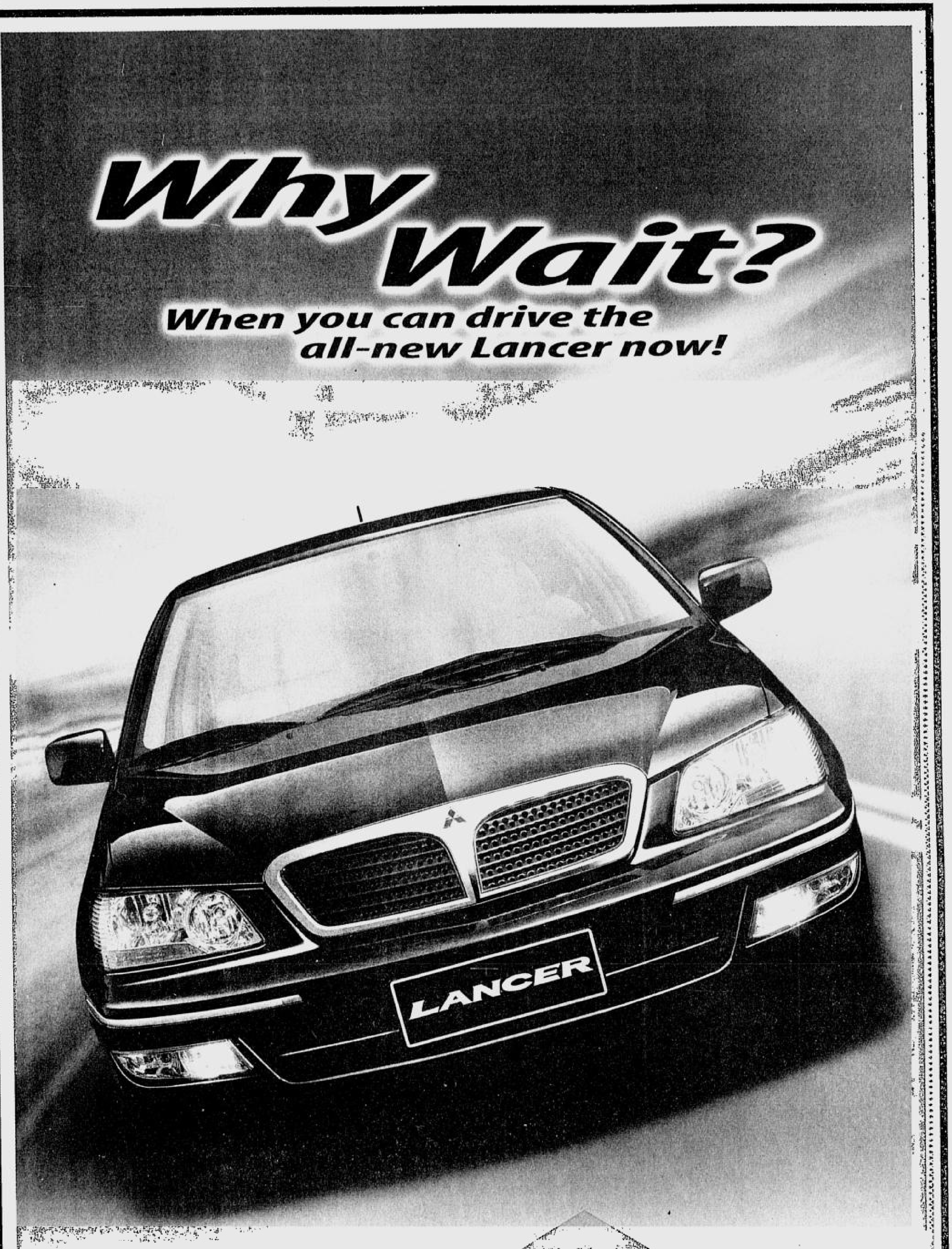
The Philippines has long resisted US demands to explicitly inscribe seventh freedom rights in the bilateral air treaty as this would violate the Constitution.

This raises the constitutional issue of ownership of public utilities, like cargo carriers, which stipulates a 60-40 majority ownership in favor of Filipino nationals, he added.

As a creative solution to the impasse, the RP panel proposed a joint operation of the cargo flights out of Clark and Subic under a cooperative agreement between US and Philippine carriers, the SOS chief noted.

The agreement was to be a separate commercial deal between the airlines outside the purview of the main treaty, thus skirting the constitutional proscription.

"But the US side rejected the proposal outright and insisted on the categorical grant of seventh freedom in the treaty. This caused the talks to quickly collapse," Joseph said.



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Meralco plan for 9-year refund scheme assailed

THE PLAN of Meralco to spread over nine years the P28 billion refund to its consumers is a ploy aimed at giving the giant utility time to increase power rates and raise money from the consumers themselves.

This was the charge yesterday of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who warned that even before consumers could get back their hard-earned money, a number of fund raising schemes aimed at increasing power rates are being hatched to finance the P28-billion refund.

Enrile said these rate-increase schemes are being pushed behind the scenes and are being peddled in media as "hard news" announcements to condition the minds of consumers and thus lead them to believe that the power distribution monopoly is using its own money to pay the refund.

Enrile said he had asked the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to furnish him copies of Meralco records regarding the P28-billion refund, which is an obligation of the company as ordered by the Supreme Court.

"We have to examine the records of the income tax payments that consumers paid that the ERC is duty-bound to provide us in order to satisfy ourselves that Meralco is not passing back in devious ways the amount to be refunded to the people," Enrile said.

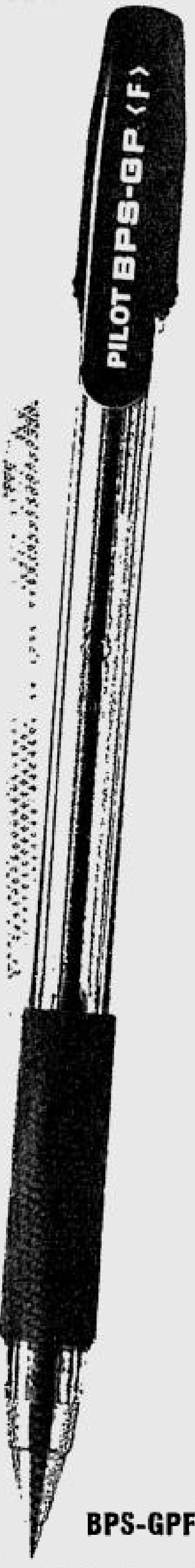
Enrile said "it is strange for the Lopez-managed Meralco to seek a nine-year period to refund P28 billion to millions of consumers in 50 franchise areas while it demanded a quick reimbursement of P9 billion in income taxes that it claimed to have paid the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

Enrile said he was seeking relief from "exploitative, abusive and questionable practices in the power and energy sectors which have led to excessive and onerous power rates and questionable charges for electricity."

Enrile noted that while Meralco claimed it had refunded consumers P1.6 billion as of July 31 this year covering 76.2 percent of Phase 1 of the refund, the power distribution company also sought another rate increase claiming that it was necessary to finance payment of its maturing obligations.

"This is odd and questionable because the company is asking consumers to finance its debts even if the same consumers had not benefited at all from the proceeds of these loans. All they ever got are ever-increasing, overcharged costs of electricity from Meralco," Enrile said.

Enrile also questioned the "undue" haste in pushing payments for the two lowest levels of Meralco consumers even while the issue of interest costs of the P28 billion that had been illegally collected from all consumers could even be taken up and resolved.



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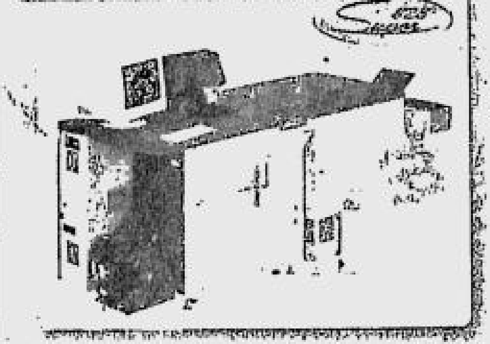

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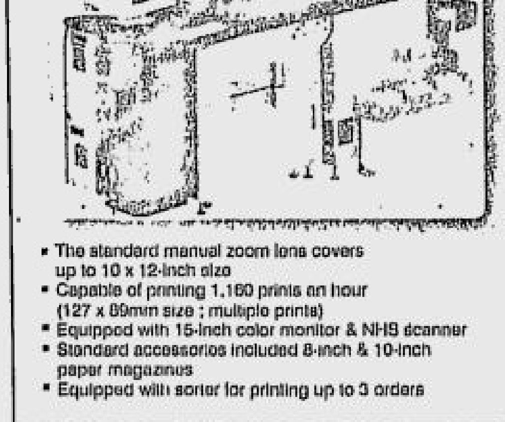

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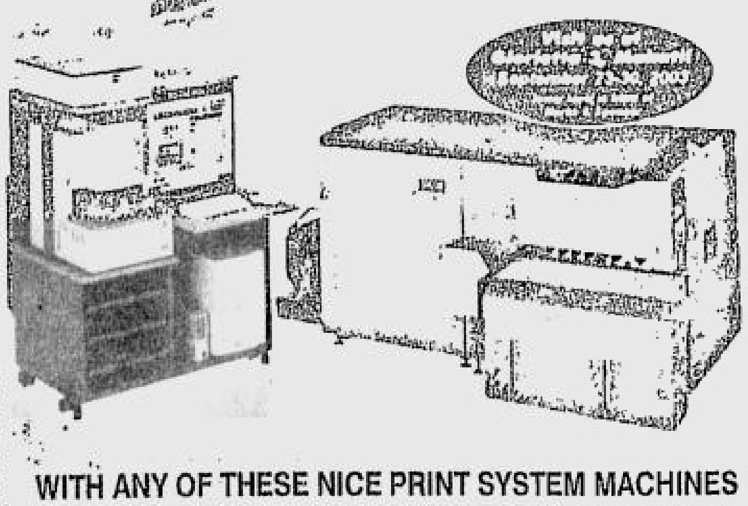

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ADVT

Expert to lecture on kidney failure

KIDNEY failure is a very serious medical problem that plagues thousands of Filipinos. Although most people are acquainted with the concept of chronic kidney failure, such as that caused by diabetes or hypertension, few people know about acute kidney failure.

In contrast to "chronic" or slowly progressive kidney failure, "acute" kidney failure is a sudden loss of kidney function, which can occur when the kidneys are subjected to a sudden shock that forces them to "turn off" in order to survive.

These and are other latest scientific studies and technological developments will be the subject of a lecture tomorrow by Dr. Dinna Cruz, head of the Critical Care Nephrology at the St. Luke's Medical Center.

Dr. Cruz's lecture is part of the 18th postgraduate course of the St. Luke's Department of Medicine, with the theme "The Internist in the New Age: Integrating New Science to a Century of Art in Medicine," Sept. 25 and 26, at the 2nd Floor Conference Room at the St. Luke's Medical Center.

She received nephrology training at Yale University and was a professor of medicine at Yale. She is board certified in internal medicine and nephrology by the American Board of Internal Medicine and the Philippine College of Physicians.

A common cause of acute kidney failure, she said, is very low blood pressure, which occurs when someone loses a significant amount of blood, as in an accident.

Many technological advances in the past 40 years and the help of state-of-the-art-equipment, kidney doctors with specialized training in the care of these critically-ill patients are able to help patients get through this medical complication.

PDI paper drive collects 70,000 kilos, saves 1,190 trees

ONLY three months since its launch, the INQUIRER'S New Paper Drive has collected some 70,000 kilos of old newspapers, saving the equivalent of 1,190 trees from being cut to produce the same amount of paper pulp.

Now on its third year, the drive collaborated with more schools, corporations and parishes in order to increase the awareness of the benefits of recycling among the country's citizens.

The affiliation with Linis-Ganda—the country's premiere recycling advocate, under the leadership of Narda Camacho—and the Metro Manila Federation of Environment headed by Mayor Bong Teves, made it possible for environmentally-conscious citizens to sell their newspapers at P5 per kilo.

This project was conceptualized after studies showed recycling of paper to be faster, easier and more economical, saving 17 trees per ton recycled. Local paper companies prefer to use recycled paper because they use less water and electricity to make quality paper. Environmentalists prefer the use of recycled paper because trees would no longer have to be cut to make new paper.

The campaign was also endorsed by the Archbishop of Manila, the Department of Education and the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF).

Schools were the most active participants in the drive. Top collectors were Claret School of Quezon City with 13,557 kilos of newspapers and Miriam College with 4,905 kilos. San Lorenzo School collected 4,115 kilos; School of the Holy Spirit of QC 2,926 kilos; Mandaluyong Elementary School 2,559 kilos; Guadalupe Catholic School 2,455 kilos; and Placido Elementary School 2,345. Other participating schools were Northfield Paref School, Don Bosco Technical School, Multiple School of QC, Adamson University, UPIS Scouting Community and Manila Science High School.

Companies likewise expressed their full support to the drive. Metrobankers Foundation initiated the collection of almost 4,000 kilos from their various branches and subsidiaries. Others who joined the drive were the League of Corporate Foundations members, including Petron Foundation, Mirant Philippines, Andres Soriano Foundation, Toyota Foundation, Ayala Foundation, Pilipinas Shell, and Intel Philippines.

"We are fortunate to have the steadfast support of our stakeholders which is key to the sustainability of this project," said INQUIRER president and CEO Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez.

Linis-Ganda will continue to pick up your old newspapers and other recyclables. Call 430-6274 for more information.

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Amoxicillin cap. 500 mg	✓ 3.70	15.75	12.05/cap
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Amoxicillin susp. 250 mg/5 ml,.60 ml	✓ 49.00	144.00	95.00/bot
Chloramphenicol cap. 500 mg	✓ 3.40	37.75	34.35/cap
Chloramphenicol susp. 125 mg/5 ml 60 ml	✓ 41.40	394.75	353.35/bot
Co-trimoxazole tab (TM-160mg SMZ-800mg)	✓ 2.30	26.00	23.70/tab
Co-trimoxazole cap. (TM-80mg SMZ-400mg)	✓ 2.60	14.80	12.20/cap
Co-trimoxazole susp. (TM-40mg SMZ-200mg)	✓ 25.00	115.75	90.75/bot
Anti-cough (Para sa Ubo)			
Bromhexine HCL syrup 4 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓ 26.70	74.75	48.05/bot
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Carbocisteine susp. 100 mg/5 ml, 60 ml	✓ 32.70	87.25	54.55/bot

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Despite big chill, GMA appoints Guingona caretaker

From page A1

of the "overall security plan to provide safety and peace of mind to the millions of people here."

"These alerts are tactical decisions that are made from time to time and do not impact on the overall state of national stability. These are a deterrent and a protective measure and should not cause undue alarm," she said, adding:

"We need sustained vigilance, and I call upon the people to cooperate with the authorities to check any threats to public order."

Guingona has lately been hounded by political intrigue, including the alleged plan of destabilization groups to install him as president. He was also rumored to have agreed to join protest rallies planned for the Oct. 18 visit of US President George W. Bush.

Guingona has denied any link with destabilization groups. He has also made it clear that he would take part only in peace and unity activities.

"The President has always believed that the Vice President would not act in a manner contrary to the Constitution and democracy," Saludo said.

GUINGONA

Just being cautious

A contingent from the Army's 2nd Infantry Division is securing the historic Edsa Shrine in the wake of intelligence reports that certain groups are planning protest actions in Metro Manila during the President's absence.

At a news briefing in Camp Aguinaldo, Gen. Narciso Abaya, Armed Forces chief of staff, said the military was monitoring suspected destabilization groups.

Earlier in the briefing, Abaya said the declaration of red alert for all AFP units nationwide was standard operating procedure whenever the President left for abroad.

This prompted reporters to ask whether there was no more threat of destabilization against the administration, to which he responded: "I did not say that. We are just being cautious about whatever moves or untoward incidents that might happen."

Country safe

Abaya, however, declared that the country would be safe while the President was away. "That's why we are on red alert," he said.

He also said there had yet to be an actual massing of protesters although, he noted, text messages dispensing warnings on coup plots and other forms of destabilization were circulating.

"But our evaluation shows that these are just rumors," he added.

At the same briefing, Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, AFP vice chief of staff, said the military had united to the extent that there were no forthcoming destabilization attempts from the defense establishment.

"We are way past the stage of coup attempts," he said. "The Armed Forces has been consolidated for some time now, and we are further consolidating it."

Full alert

"In preparation for" the President's departure, the Philippine National Police's elite Special Action Force is on full alert.

In fact, the whole police force including the Headquarters Support Service unit in Camp Crame is on "heightened alert," PNP Director for Operations Enrique Galang told reporters.

Like Abaya, Galang said this was standard operating procedure "every time our President goes out of the country."

Again like Abaya, Galang dismissed rumors of destabilization while the President was away, but said the full alert was part of the PNP's readiness in case of such a move.

Nothing new

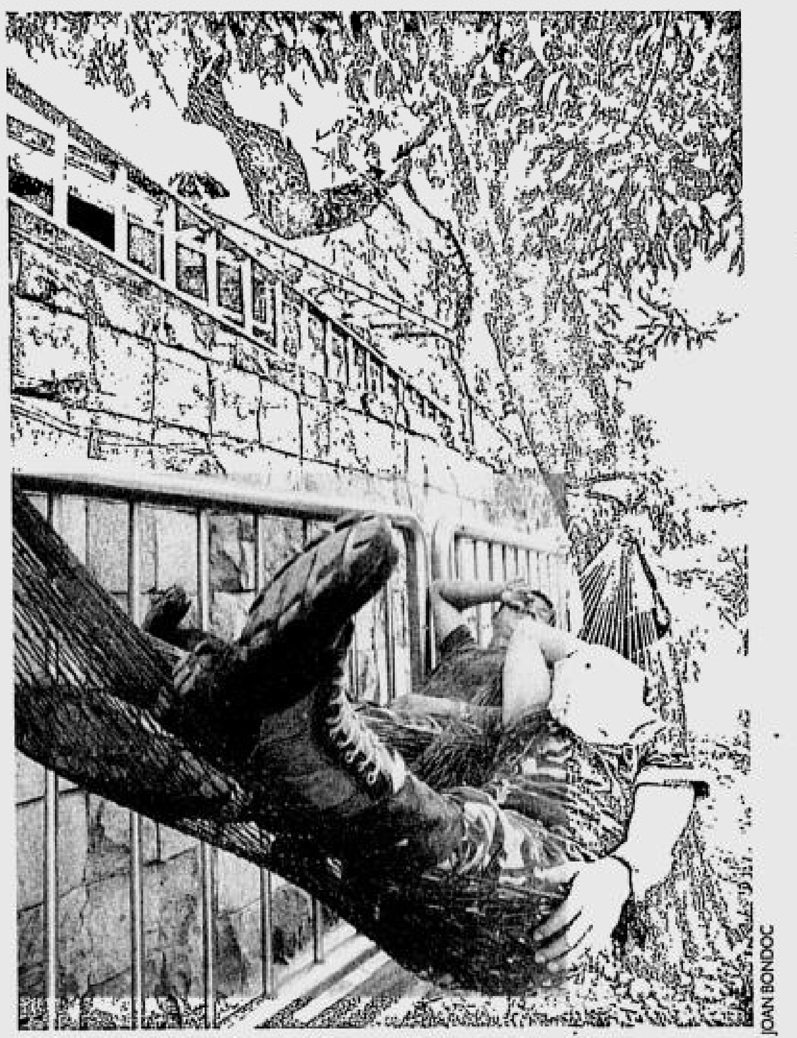
"It doesn't mean that just because these are just rumors, we won't be prepared," he stressed.

But Galang pointed out that the PNP had never changed its alert status. "We have always been on heightened alert, if you will notice," he said. "So there is nothing new in the AFP declaration of red alert or in the PNP declaration of heightened alert."

He also said they had yet to decide whether to deploy a unit of the Special Action Force at the Edsa Shrine.

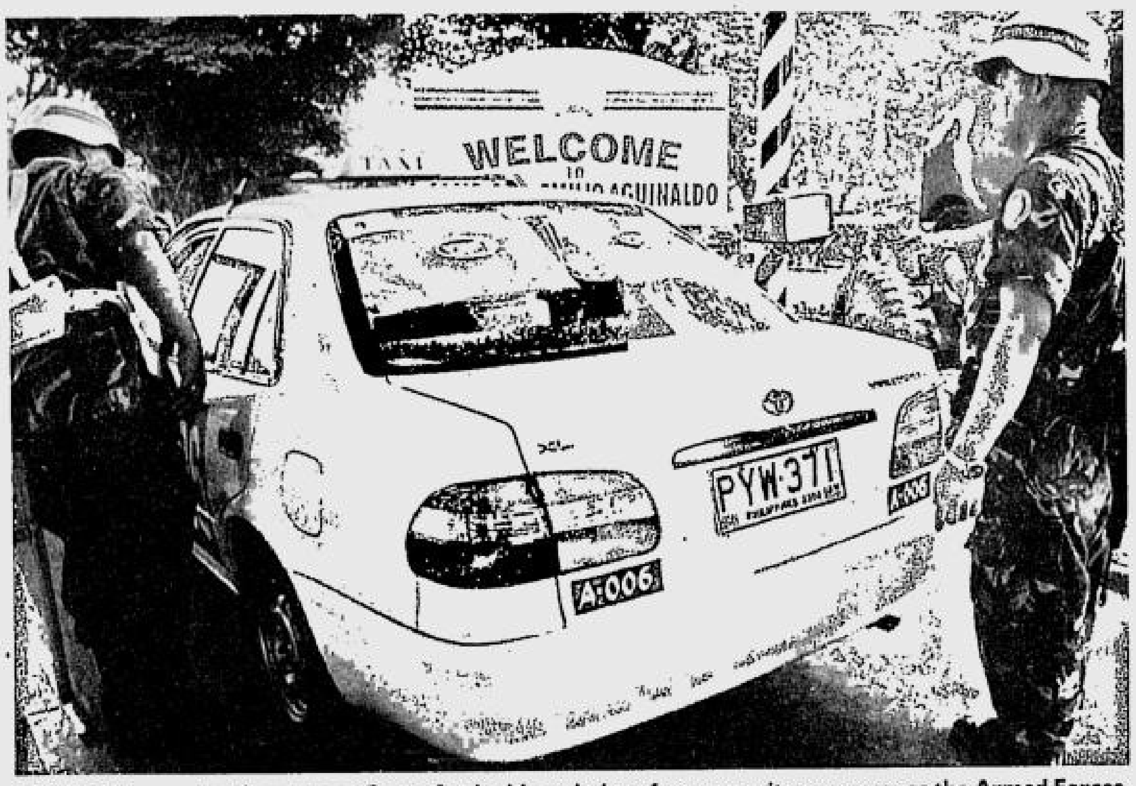
"That depends on the situation. It's not an automatic deployment. As of the moment, I don't see any need for the SAF to be deployed there," he said. *With reports from Norman Bordadora and Alcuin Valle Papa*

PRESIDENT Macapagal holds troop level consultations with soldiers of the 4th Infantry Battalion of the Tabak (1st) Division in Libertad, Tungawan, Zamboanga-Sibugay. EDWIN BACASMAS



JOAN BONDOC

RED alert, yes, but these soldiers guarding the Edsa Shrine on Ortigas Avenue also need some shut-eye under and high up the trees—in their hammocks.



SENTRIES manning the gates at Camp Aguinaldo strictly enforce security measures as the Armed Forces go on red alert while the President is out of the country. JOAN BONDOC

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
FOR THE REMOVAL AND EXCLUSION OF
THE CROSS SUBSIDY CHARGES/RATES
ERC CASE NO. 2003-285

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION
CORPORATION (TRANSCO),
Applicant,
x------------------------------------x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given of the filing of an "Application" on May 12, 2003 by applicant National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) for the removal and exclusion of the Intra-Regional Grid Cross Subsidy (IRGCS) charge in its rates/rate schedule, with prayer for provisional authority, docketed as ERC Case No. 2003-285.

The Commission has set the next hearing of the case on October 23, 2003 at nine o'clock (9:00 a.m.) in the morning at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request that before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable Chairman, MANUEL R. SANCHEZ and the Honorables MARY ANNE B. COLAYCO, OLIVER B. BUTALID, CARLOS R. ALINDADA, and LETICIA V. IBAY, Commissioners, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 10th day of September, 2003 at Pasig City.

(Sgd.) FRUCTUOSO O. LAGUNZAD, JR.
Executive Director III

(PDI - Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2003)

Still a waiting game for Kuratong

From page A1

next Tuesday.

A swarm of reporters had assembled at the Supreme Court to wait for copies of the decision. Puno informed them at around 2:30 p.m that the Kuratong Baleleng case would not be taken up.

The "rubout or shootout" case has hounded opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson and other former officers of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission. Yesterday it continued to trigger discussions, accusations and speculations.

Display of power

Lacson's colleague in the opposition, Sen. Edgardo Angara, assailed the administration's "excessive display of power" in the form of a command conference of government agencies held Monday supposedly in preparation for the possible revival of the multiple-murder case.

Angara cautioned the administration against such a display, saying "the people might suspect that it's really politically motivated."

Malacañang, however, said the administration was not "immediately concerned" with whatever the high court decided but was prepared to enforce it.

Hypothetical

"We do not wish to speculate on hypothetical situations," Ricardo Saludo, deputy spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, said when asked if Malacañang was expecting protest rallies in the event of a decision unfavorable to Lacson. "I'm sure whatever decision the Supreme Court makes, it will be followed by the government, and we certainly have sufficient police forces to enforce [the tribunal's] decisions."

Timing

Saludo dismissed an earlier statement of the opposition that Malacañang was trying to influence the high court into ruling against Lacson, who had accused First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo of laundering money contributed to his wife's campaign.

"The Supreme Court does not take anybody's signal to determine its rulings," Saludo said. "It rules on the law based on its own light, so to suggest that it will follow the cue from any other agency, I think, diminishes its stature and independence."

Saludo also said the Palace had nothing to do with the "timing" of the ruling. He expressed its belief that "any act that advances the course of justice will not backfire on the government."

Cooperation, coordination

Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong said Monday and yesterday that the meeting held at the main office of the National Bureau of Investigation, in which representatives of the Philippine National Police and the Departments of Justice and of Interior and Local Governments were present, was not focused primarily on the Kuratong Baleleng case.

"It was about the cooperation and coordination of various agencies in the gathering of evidence and testimony that we can present to the court so that we can have a speedy dispensation of justice," Datumanong said in a statement.

But Angara told reporters that he found highly unusual the "large amount of time and effort and extraordinary assembly of government agencies... just to implement a Supreme Court decision."

Mahusay rescue

Had the government done this with regard to the escape of Indonesian bomber Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, the fugitive would now have been recaptured, he said.

Angara likened the "display of power" to the "rescue" by Palace officials, backed by presidential security escorts, of Eugenio Mahusay Jr., Lacson's ex-star witness in his allegations of corruption against the President's husband.

Arrest warrant

The senator also said the charges against Lacson were bailable.

"It's not certain that he would be put in jail," Angara said.

Jail or not, the PNP is prepared to follow procedures if an arrest warrant is issued on Lacson, according to PNP Director for Operations Enrique Galang.

Galang told reporters that the matter was tackled at the Monday meeting at the NBI headquarters.

"The PNP is always prepared for whatever the court will require us to do, like the service of possible warrants. As of this moment, there are no warrants of arrest to talk about," he said.

Galang said the Supreme Court decision might entail the remanding of the Kuratong Baleleng case to a lower court, which would in turn issue the warrant on Lacson.

"If I still know my law, the warrant will come from the [lower] court that will hear the trial," he said.

In the event that a warrant is issued on Lacson, Galang said, the PNP would have to notify the Senate president and sergeant-at-arms even if the chamber was not in session.

Detention

If the Senate is not in session and the Senate sergeant-at-arms cannot locate Lacson, Galang said, "that is the time we will look for him elsewhere."

Galang said a unit that could possibly be assigned to serve the warrant was the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group headed by Lacson's old foe, Director Eduardo Matillano.

A few years ago, Matillano and his men raided the office of Lacson's Specal Project Alpha in Camp Crame. They discovered wiretaps in Matillano's office as well as other offices including that of then PNP chief Gen. Roberto Lastimoso.

Galang also said the PNP leadership had yet to decide on the matter of where Lacson would be detained. "That is a subject matter that will be settled by the [lower] court because the commitment order will definitely come from the court," he said. *Reports from Gerald Lacuarta, Juliet L. Javellana, Christine O. Avendano and Alcuin Valle Papa*

KURATONG Baleleng Case. Bodies of suspected bank robbers are loaded on a jeepney after the alleged shootout on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City on May of 1995. PDI FILE PHOTO

Skilled peace negotiator named new defense chief

From page A1

post as peace adviser.

The President feels that with Ermita, the Department of National Defense is in good hands, according to deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo, who announced the appointment. She had held the defense portfolio since Reyes quit with a warning of a well-funded plot to undermine her administration in the run-up to elections in May 2004.

"Secretary Ermita has a distinguished record as a retired general in the military and also will bring to the security authority of the country his experience in the peace process negotiations," Saludo said.

A psychological warfare expert who retired from the Army as a lieutenant general in 1988, he inherits the challenge of overhauling a 113,000-member Armed Forces of the Philippines plagued by inadequate resources, corruption and discontent over the pace of reforms.

Command guidance

The President had earlier said the next defense secretary would not take over immediately, but she changed her mind because she had issued a command guidance to the AFP and the DND during her short stint as concurrent defense secretary, Saludo said.

He said the President wanted Ermita to execute the guidance which includes reforms in the AFP and ensuring the delivery of logistics to the field, addressing corruption, and combat strategies to ensure peace and order around the country.

"Now that she has issued that, she's confident that an earlier turnover of the defense portfolio would be in the interest of speedily implementing the reforms that she has outlined," Saludo said.

Saludo said the appointment should not be linked to coup rumors still lingering while the President is preparing to leave for New York tonight. He also said Ermita should not be saddled with the Oakwood mutineers and their charges against his predecessor Reyes and ex-military intelligence chief Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus because two commissions were already handling the twin issues.

Ms Macapagal is also set to meet in New York with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad about the resumption of the government-MILF talks. Ermita was expected to join the President in the meeting.

Peace negotiator

Ermita was involved in the peace process after his retirement from the military and during his nine-year stint as congressman representing the first district of Batangas and chairing the House committee on peace process and integration.

As chief government negotiator with the MILF, he has been in the forefront of the Macapagal administration's efforts to forge a peace settlement with the MILF amid intermittent clashes and the reported coddling of fugitive Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi by the group.

With a sober demeanor and positive disposition, Ermita had been skillfully handling ticklish issues of the peace process with the MILF and advocating constructive engagement with the group.

He served as point man of then President Fidel V. Ramos in the government's peace talks with the Moro National Liberation Front in 1992. As a member of the National Unification Commission, which Ramos formed to explore talks with communists, rightist and secessionist rebels, he helped conceptualize the government's peace strategy.

After Ramos handpicked him to reopen exploratory talks with the MNLF, Ermita's meeting with MNLF leader Nur Misuari in Tripoli, Libya, was followed by four rounds of formal negotiations that culminated in a final peace agreement in 1996.

During the negotiations with the MNLF where he sat as vice chair of the government panel, Ermita was said to have wielded his vast experience on the Mindanao conflict, his close friendship with the MNLF commanders and his political skills.

'Best choice'

Ramos hailed Ermita as the "best choice for the job."

"He is well rounded both in military and civilian affairs," Ramos said in an interview over the ABS-CBN News Channel. "[Ermita] has an international image and reputation."

In Davao City, the MILF welcomed Ermita's appointment and hoped that he would not change his views on the peace process.

Experienced

"We believe Secretary Ermita is very experienced in the peace process in Mindanao. He was involved for a very long period of time trying to seek serious peaceful solutions to the problem in Mindanao," MILF vice chair for political affairs Ghazali Jaafar told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

"We hope he will continue to stand on his principles on the solution to the Bangsamoro problem and on finding peaceful means with dignity and not the peaceful solution enforced on the people," Jaafar said.

But the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan was unimpressed, saying Ermita was still a former general who would not be in a position to reform the AFP.

Hardliner faction

Bayan secretary general Teddy Casiño said the appointment was not a plus factor for peace with the communist-led National Democratic Front. "[Ermita] is actually one of the stumbling blocks of the peace process. He belongs to the faction of the hawks in the Macapagal-Arroyo government. He belongs to the same group as … Reyes and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez."

"He has this peace rhetoric, but in the end, he kowtows to the interests of the hardliners in the military," Casiño said.

Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon said Ermita was fit for the position.

Congressman

"Having been a member of Congress for three consecutive terms, he probably is the most knowledgeable person on the peace process between the government and the MILF," he said.

Robert Layson, parish priest of Pikit, North Cotabato, who also works for people displaced by war, said Ermita's appointment was "good news."

"He has a very good knowledge on the situation in Mindanao especially on the substantial issues important to the Bangsamoro people. He is very much concerned on the situation of Mindanao. Definitely, he can help," Layson said.

South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes, on the other hand, said the many years that Ermita has been out of the Armed Forces, "he now has a civilian culture." *With reports from Norman Bordadora, Joselle d.R. Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and* INQUIRER *wires*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 24, 2003
25th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezra 9:5-9
Gospel: Lk 9:1-6

Jesus called his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to drive out all evil spirits and to heal diseases. And he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He instructed them, "Don't take anything for the journey, neither walking stick, nor bag, nor bread, nor silver coins; and don't even take a spare tunic. Whatever house you enter, remain there until you leave that place. And wherever they don't welcome you, leave the town and shake the dust from your feet: it will be as a testimony against them."

So they set out and went through the villages, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Commentary

"And He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal." Part of the mission entrusted to the disciples is to go out and heal. Sad to say this aspect is mostly forgotten. Faith healers are called quack doctors or fake healers. But the bible is full of miraculous healings from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Jesus himself was a great healer. The blind got their eyesight restored, the lame got the strength for their feet, the dumb was able to hear and speak, the dead were raised to life. After the ascension of Jesus, the apostles continued the ministry of healing, Peter used the name of Jesus to heal a lame beggar at the entrance of the temple. Healing is a concrete sign of the Good News of the Kingdom of God. In God's Kingdom, sickness is defeated and sick people are freed from oppressive illness. If we truly believe, then nothing is impossible.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

MERCANTILE LAW/COMMERCIAL LAW (TRANSPORTATION LAW)—Duty of common carriers—The law requires common carriers to carry passengers safely using the utmost diligence of very cautious persons with due regard for all circumstances. Such duty of a common carrier to provide safety to its passengers so obligates it not only during the course of the trip but for so long as the passengers are within its premises and where they ought to be in pursuance to the contract of carriage. The statutory provisions render a common carrier liable for death of or injury to passengers (a) through the negligence or wilful acts of its employees or b) on account of wilful acts or negligence of other passengers or of strangers if the common carrier's employees through the exercise of due diligence could have prevented or stopped the act or omission. In case of such death or injury, a carrier is presumed to have been at fault or been negligent, and by simple proof of injury, the passenger is relieved of the duty to still establish the fault or negligence of the carrier or of its employees and the burden shifts upon the carrier to prove that the injury is due to an unforeseen event or to force majeure. In the absence of satisfactory explanation by the carrier on how the accident occurred, which petitioners, according to the appellate court, have failed to show, the presumption would be that it has been at fault, an exception from the general rule that negligence must be proved. The foundation of petitioner's liability is the contract of carriage and its obligation to indemnify the victim arises from the breach of that contract by reason of its failure to exercise the high diligence required of the common carrier. In the discharge of its commitment to ensure the safety of passengers, a carrier may choose to hire its own employees or avail itself of the services of an outsider or an independent firm to undertake the task. In either case, the common carrier is not relieved of its responsibilities under the contract of carriage. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Vitug, First Division, Light Rail Transit Authority v. Navidad, G.R. No. 145804, February 6, 2003]

BY R. B. VERA

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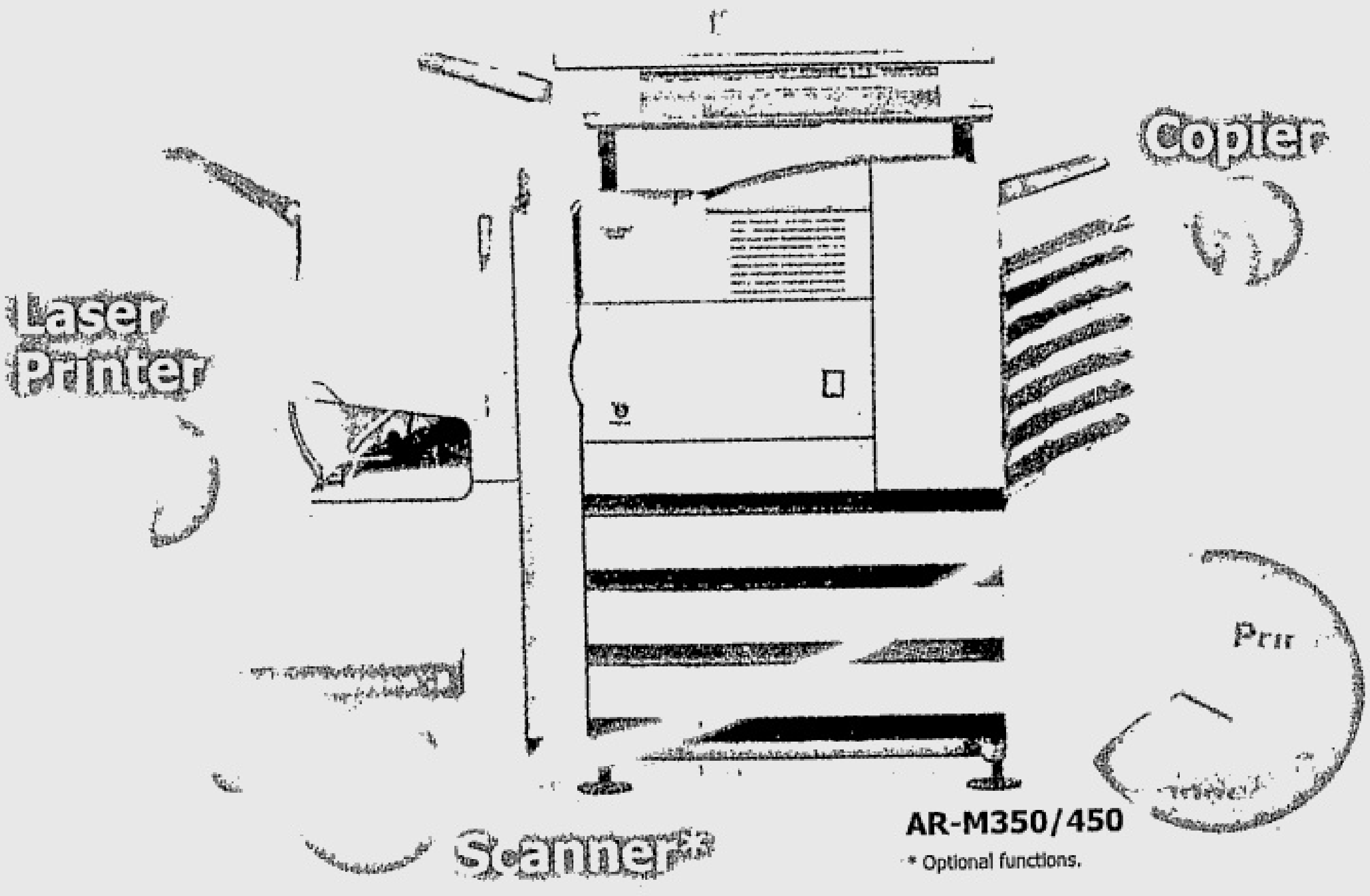

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GMA running in 2004 'a done deal'

From page A1

alone, many people think that she would be forsaking the country if she did not vie for the polls, despite her earlier decision," Bunye said.

In the end, he said, the 2004 question was a "matter of conscience, destiny and divine guidance," the presidential spokesperson said.

"Let's wait for God's response," Rufino quipped.

Serve full term

Rufino, also national executive director of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats, said the sentiment among the President's circle of advisers was, "If you run for a term, you serve the full term."

Members of the House of Representatives are proposing that she serve as a transition President to pave the way for the shift to a parliamentary government in 2007. This requires amendments to the Constitution on or before the May 2004 elections.

Under the scheme, the presidential election would still push through as scheduled but the winners would have to settle for a three-year term or up to 2007.

By law, presidents serve only six years and cannot be reelected.

However, Ms Macapagal is not covered by the law because she was never elected president. As vice president, she came to power in a popular uprising that toppled her scandal-tainted predecessor Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Rufino said that if Charter change pushed through, the question of whether the people would agree to a transition President should be included in the plebiscite.

He said 90 to 95 percent of Lakas members, including former President Fidel Ramos and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., would endorse the President's candidacy.

While Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. has differences with the President and some party leaders, "when push comes to shove" they expect Guingona to "fall in line," Rufino said.

"It's a fait accompli," he said of the Lakas decision.

He said that while it was not yet time for official party endorsements, the Lakas national directorate would come up with a statement during its Oct. 7 meeting to express full support for the President and "whatever her decision" would be.

"There's nothing wrong in running again. (If she does) then she will have a full and clean mandate and all those questions (about her legitimacy) would be settled," Rufino said.

National interest

He said three things would make the President change her mind about 2004—national interest, national security and duty to country. The President declared on Dec. 30 that she would not stand for election in May.

Rufino said it was only Ms Macapagal who could move the country out of the economic difficulties as well as tackle the threats of terrorism and domestic political troubles.

He alleged that the "destabilization moves" of opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a declared presidential aspirant, were part of the national security problems.

Malacañang started the talk about Ms Macapagal's running in 2004 on the eve of her departure for a five-day trip to the United States and Europe, including an audience with Pope John Paul II in Rome.

Bunye said the President was a religious woman, who starts her day with a Mass and seeks divine guidance for all important decisions.

Ms Macapagal will play host to her powerful friend and ally, US President George W. Bush, who is due for an eight-hour visit to Manila on Oct. 18 on his way to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Bangkok.

Bush has reportedly urged Ms Macapagal to run in 2004 during her state visit to Washington last May.

BIG THRILL IN TUNGAWAN. Schoolchildren and adults brave the turbulence from the presidential chopper carrying President Macapagal who visited the Zamboanga-Sibugay town Tuesday to oversee military operations against Indonesian fugitive Fathur Al-Ghozi. EDWIN BACASMAS

BF announces he wants to be No. 2

By Carlito Pablo

BAYANI Fernando, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, is almost certain that he will be the running mate of President Macapagal-Arroyo in May 2004.

"I would say 60 percent," Fernando said in an interview at the House of Representatives after appearing at the hearing for his agency's proposed budget next year.

Pressed to elaborate on his chances of making it as the vice presidential candidate of Ms Macapagal, Fernando said: "Make it 70 percent."

"I have actually signified my intention to run as vice president," said Fernando, who made a name as the mayor of Marikina who cleaned and spruced up the once dreary shoe-making town.

Commenting on Malacañang's statement that the President was waiting for divine intervention to determine whether she would run, Fernando said: "It's just right for her to run."

Fernando said that if he and Ms Macapagal would actually make it as a tandem, "then that's the will of God."

He said that he had an edge over other vice presidential aspirants in the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

"If they (party leaders) look at the suitability and qualifications (of contenders), I came from the local governments," Fernando said.

A vice president with a thorough experience in running a local government is what the country needs, according to the MMDA chair.

Fernando said such experience would allow a vice president to help in the delivery of basic services to the grass roots.

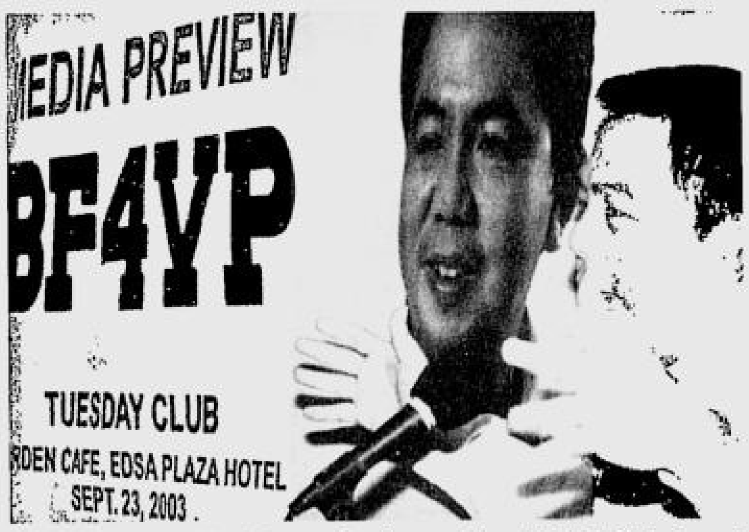
"I have that one advantage of having served as a mayor," he said.

Fernando, however, conceded that there was a chance that Ms Macapagal might just stick to her Dec. 30 announcement that she won't stand for election in May.

But this does not deter the gung ho Fernando. "Whoever will be chosen by the party will be my president," he said.

Then presidential political adviser Jose Ma. Rufino said a few months ago that Fernando might make a suitable running mate for the President.

Fernando said he was also a believer in divine intervention. If chosen as running mate, Fernando said: "Ah, thank you God if that happens."



WHILE other presidential wannabes hem and haw, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando goes right out and tells everybody who wants to listen that he's available for vice president in the 2004 elections. JOAN BONDOC

Transition president 'dangerous'—bishop

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BAGOLOD CITY—Bacolod's outspoken Bishop Vicente Navarra described as "very dangerous" the proposal of the House of Representatives to elect a transition president in 2004 preparatory to a shift to a parliamentary system in 2007.

In a circular released yesterday, Navarra batted for the holding of regular elections in May 2004 because the people were not sure about the real intention of the proponents of a transition president.

Navarra also delivered a stinging rebuke of senators and congressmen who, he said, were squandering time and resources over "useless" discussions and squabbling.

"We are gravely discouraged and demoralized when you squander precious time in useless discussions, petty bickering and mudslinging," the prelate said in the pastoral letter.

The bishop called on members of the House and Senate to concentrate instead on "enlightened and liberating legislation that will ensure a brighter future for the country and the people."

"During sessions in Congress, we also expect that you observe proper discussion, which bespeaks highly of your position as legislators of the land," he said.

Since the failed Oakwood mutiny in Makati on July 17, "deplorable and condemnable events" have been happening successively causing "great alarm and feelings of insecurity" among the people, he said.

He cited the "puzzling and queer behavior of politicians who have been implicated in the failed mutiny whose involvement or non-involvement have not been clarified to the general public."

GMA hallucinating, says Angara

By Christine O. Avendaño

"WHEN you talk to God, you're praying. But when God talks to you, you're hallucinating," opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara yesterday taunted reports that President Macapagal is seeking divine intervention in her decision whether to run or not for the presidency in 2004.

Asked what he would like God to tell the President, Angara told the Bulong Pulungan news forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza: "She should be faithful to her promise and just ensure the elections would be clean and honest."

Clear-cut decision

Angara said he believes this would be "enough legacy" for the President.

The country's prevailing political uncertainty would be considerably eased if the President comes out with a "clear-cut decision" on her presidential plans.

Angara said that the confusing political situation would worsen if Congress agrees to the proposal to amend the Constitution to pave the way for the election of a transitional or three-year term president in 2004 and a shift to a parliamentary government by 2007.

Transitional

Some of the President's advisers had said Ms Macapagal would make an ideal transitional President because she has already served three years in office and would not hesitate to step down in 2007.

But Angara said he hopes instigators of the transition president proposal would "drop the idea."

"As far I'm concerned, there is no more time and I have no inclination at all supporting a change of the Constitution before 2004," he told reporters.

He said the elections should continue as scheduled.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan and Sen. John Osmeña, on the other hand, said they believed the President was indeed running next year.

Osmeña said the President has always behaved like a candidate, for one.

Honasan said he believed Ms Macapagal is "trying to consolidate as many forces and support as possible."

But he said the people would not forgive the President from going back on her word not to run next year.

'God being abused' bothers bishop

From page A1

Cruz said he had no qualms about Ms Macapagal running in 2004 as she "is the most qualified among the candidates."

But he expressed misgivings about the President mentioning God whenever she made a major political decision.

How come

He went on to say, "How come God never talks to me? I'm envious. I have not felt God telling me to do things. God must be aloof to me. I do many things but I don't hear God."

Activist-priest Robert Reyes agrees with Cruz, saying that if the President declares that "running in 2004 is God's will," then that will make God inconsistent. Ms Macapagal earlier said that God had told her not to run.

Reyes described the Malacañang talk about seeking God's guidance as "pure media gimmickry."

His unsolicited advice for the President: "Just do it Gloria. Don't drag God into this."

Reyes said that if the President was a prayerful person she should not announce her "God-given" decision often.

"We are in a way cheapening discernment. We all need guidance and prayer presupposes humility," he said.

Reyes, an outspoken administration critic, told the Chief Executive to listen instead to the "real voice of God"—the people.

The priest said the people were united in not wanting the President to run, but coalition members in the House of Representatives said it was unfair for the country if she would not run.

Call of party

"She cannot be totally oblivious to the call of the party and the people. Surveys show that she enjoys much support and popularity despite the Jose Pidal issue," Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said the President's decision to pray for guidance was very "reassuring," although he admitted that she was not under pressure to decide because the filing of candidacy was in December.

Rep. Prospero Nograles of Davao City said time was running out for the President.

Headless chicken

"It's time for her to make a decision because many are afraid that the party will become a headless chicken without a definite presidential bet," Nograles said.

He said many Lakas leaders were already being wooed to support other presidential aspirants.

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara said yesterday that his own Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) and Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) would join forces for next year's elections and would announce their common presidential candidate by Oct. 15.

Grand coalition

"We're looking at a grand coalition with a common vision," Angara, LDP president, said at the weekly Bulong Pulungan in the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel.

Angara said the two of the largest political parties were aligning "in the next 10 days."

He said that he was trying to unify the mainstream political opposition so that they could serve as an "alternative" to the administration come election time.

Angara blamed the government for sinking the country "so deep into poverty and deprivation."

He said last week that he and Cojuangco had been talking for the past two months on their parties' possible coalition for 2004.

Angara said LDP and NPC planned to support common presidential and vice presidential candidates and would field a senatorial slate. *With reports from Cynthia Balana and Christine O. Avendaño*

GMA told: It's a sin to tell a lie

From page A1

ments.

"I advise the President to stop praying aloud and to be cautious because God does not love liars. She already gave her word during the Rizal Day celebration in Baguio City on Dec. 30, 2002 that she's not running," Suplico told the INQUIRER.

Suplico was reacting to a Malacañang statement that Ms Macapagal was praying "very hard" for divine guidance on whether to run or not.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran said the President's fate in 2004 was up to the people, not up to God.

Beltran said there was no genuine clamor for the President to seek a second term and that her Dec. 30 announcement had been widely accepted and welcomed.

Courting church support

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas described the President's invocation of divine guidance as "blasphemous, immoral and highly despicable"

Suplico said that making public the President's prayer was like courting the Church to support her decision to run in the 2004 presidential election.

"In this case, she's again trying to mix politics with religion. The majority of the Filipinos would like to see the presidency as a paragon of honesty," he said.

Beltran also said the President would be disappointed if she is counting on US President George W. Bush visit to bolster her popularity and chances to clinch a full presidential term.

"Bush's seal of good housekeeping is not going to convince the Filipino people to vote for Ms Macapagal in 2004; Bush himself is a president unpopular with his own constituents," Beltran said.

Bush intervention

According to militant groups, President Macapagal is not waiting for divine intervention, but for an endorsement from Bush.

They said that Ms Macapagal plans to trade off Filipino local industries for the Bush endorsement when Bush arrives here for an eight-hour visit on Oct. 18.

"George W. Bush aims to solidify bilateral trade relations between a dominating foreign power and a local puppet," Sanlakas Rep. JV Bautista said in a statement.

"President Macapagal is inclined to ask the consent of the god of puppets and the world's No. 1 terrorist—US President Bush . . . Ms Macapagal, the world's No. 1 puppet could be soliciting guidance from her puppet master, nothing more, nothing less," Pamalakaya information officer Gerry Albert Corpuz said in a statement.

Rep. Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur said since it was the President who made a commitment to the people not to run again, she alone can explain to the people if she decides to break it.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

RICE in a press briefing in Washington. AP

Bush adviser says Iraq to remain under US rule

WASHINGTON—US national security adviser Condoleezza Rice said Monday that France's insistence that Iraqis regain sovereignty over their country within months "isn't workable."

Rice stressed at a White House press briefing that a constitution and democratic elections have to happen before sovereignty can be returned to the Iraqi people.

Asked about the French plan, Rice replied: "As all of us have said, the French plan which would somehow try to transfer sovereignty to an unelected group of people just isn't workable."

"The transfer of sovereignty (must) be orderly and done in a way that is going to work," Rice said.

The United States wants a new resolution at the UN Security Council seeking reinforcements for a multi-national force in Iraq and funds to help the reconstruction of the country.

France has insisted the United States produce a plan allowing for a speedy return to Iraqi rule following the US-led war that brought down Saddam Hussein.

"Obviously we would like French support, but the French will have to make their own determination," Rice said.

France's President Jacques Chirac said in an interview with the New York Times published Monday that France will probably abstain in any vote on a new US resolution if it does not set out a deadline for a prompt transfer of sovereignty.

Members of Iraq's Governing Council has also been pushing the US Congress to put pressure on the Bush administration for power to be handed over to the interim government before a new constitution is written and elections are held.

President George W. Bush's security advisor said Iraq had to evaluate its sovereignty in 30 years and it is more important now "to concentrate on the steps that need to be taken" to pave the way for sovereignty.

She said the main US goal is to give the Iraqi people self-rule as soon as possible, but she declined to place a timeline. "We'll see how long it takes," she said.

Rice cautioned that returning sovereignty too soon could be counterproductive.

"The resolution has to do what is best for Iraq. It cannot be something that tries to give premature sovereignty... not real sovereignty, sovereignty in principle, those ideas are just not going to work, we have to have an orderly process," Rice said. *AFP*

Another car bomb hits UN Iraq headquarters

BAGHDAD—A suicide car bomber blew himself up near United Nations headquarters in Baghdad on Monday, also killing a security guard and wounding 19 people, a month after a huge truck bomb devastated the building.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed dismay at the attack, launched on the eve of a General Assembly meeting in New York which an Iraqi delegation is due to attend.

"We need a secure environment to be able to operate," Annan said at UN headquarters in New York. "We will go forward but of course if it continues to deteriorate, then our operations will be handicapped considerably."

One of Iraq's representatives, Governing Council member Akila al-Hashemi, was critically wounded on Saturday in an assassination attempt in Baghdad.

Capt. Sean Kirley, a US officer at the scene of Monday's blast, 250 meters from the UN building where 22 people died last month, described it as a suicide attack.

Kirley said the bomber drove into the UN parking lot and was stopped by an Iraqi security guard.

The blast blew the car in half, killing the driver and the guard. A burned-out hulk was all that remained of the vehicle.

"The driver and the guard engaged in conversation and the bomb was detonated from inside the vehicle," Kirley said.

He said the bomber had been aiming for the UN building but was deterred by security. "He wanted to get into the UN headquarters and he changed his target," he said.

Elsewhere in Iraq, men in two cars attacked a police station in the southern city of Basra with guns and explosives, wounding nine policemen, a senior police officer said. In the northern city of Mosul, assailants fired rocket-propelled grenades at a police station, wounding a number of policemen and bystanders, local officials and witnesses said.

Annan, opening an international conference on terrorism, said those fighting militancy must also hold out the promise of a better and fairer world.

"If we do not, we shall find ourselves acting as a recruiting sergeant for the very terrorists we seek to suppress," he told world leaders.

However, French President Jacques Chirac, in New York for the UN session, said that when a country is under foreign occupation, terrorism "unjustly captures the struggle for freedom for its own ends." He did not mention directly the US-led war in Iraq, which France opposed.

"As the fate of the West is bound up with that of the ailing Middle East, wealthy nations must hold out to that region the hope of development and democracy, modernity, openness to the outside world, and dialogue," Chirac said.

The bombing cast a grim shadow over the world body as leaders from around the globe gathered to discuss Iraq's future.

The second suicide attack on the United Nations in as many months underlined the instability in Iraq just a day before Bush was to address the UN General Assembly and ask for help in bringing order to Baghdad.

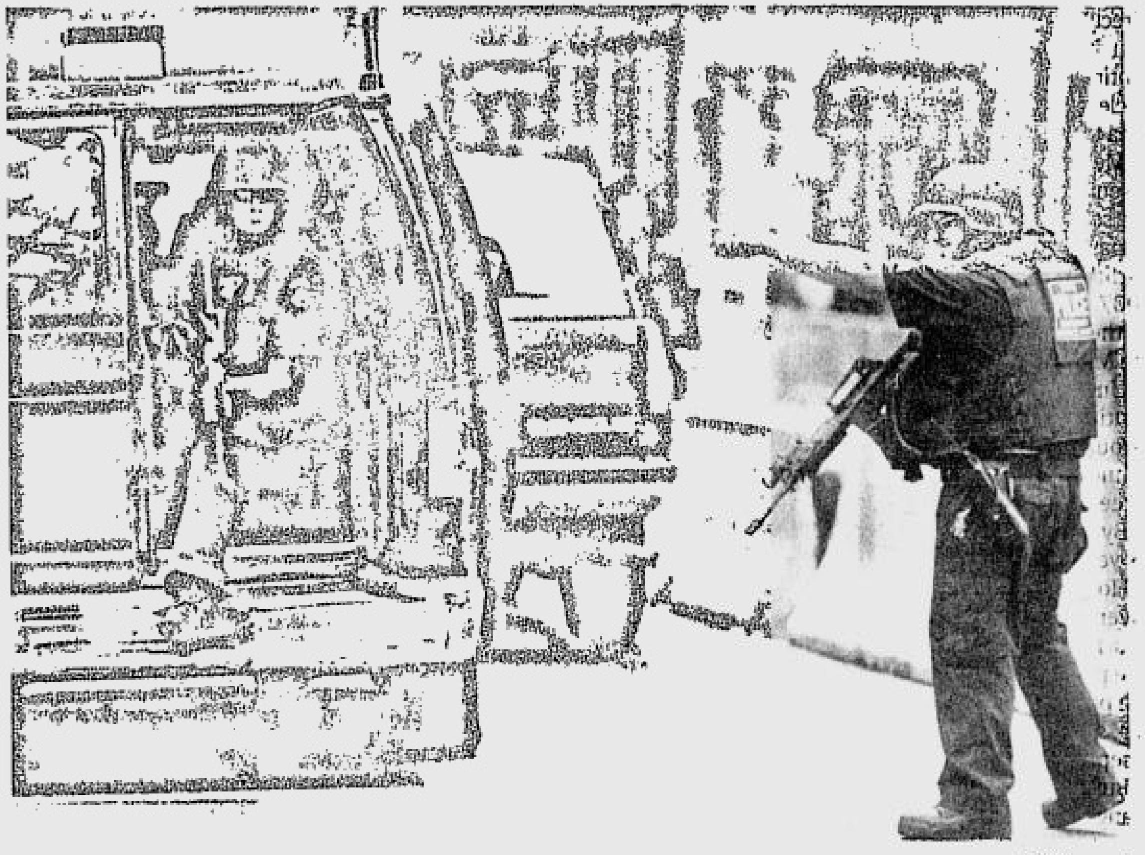
"Obviously I am shocked and distressed by this latest attack," Annan said.

"We are assessing the situation... and we will decide as we move forward what our posture should be."

What role the world body will play in post-war Iraq will be one of the central issues when the world body's annual general debate, which lasts until Oct. 3, begins on Tuesday.

A year after Bush came to the United Nations and challenged it to take action against Saddam Hussein—and then went ahead without its support—the US president will now push for an expanded UN role in Iraq.

Annan has told council members he wants a clear-cut UN mandate in Iraq as well as concrete measures to step up security. *Reuters, AFP*



SECURITY checks in Baghdad were stepped up following the latest bomb attack on the UN headquarters there.

Brod of terror network leader held in Pakistan

KARACHI—Pakistani security forces have detained a brother of Hambali, a militant accused of masterminding bombings in Southeast Asia and being al-Qaida's key regional contact, senior officials said on Monday.

The brother was among 15 students arrested on Saturday in a series of raids on Islamic religious schools in the southern port city of Karachi. The students were held for suspected links to militants and involvement in activities damaging to Pakistan.

"Yes, his (Hambali's) brother is among them," said a senior Pakistan interior ministry official, who asked not to be named.

An official from Pakistan's Federal Investigation Bureau, who also asked not to be identified, said the suspects—two from Indonesia and 13 Malaysians—were still in Karachi.

"Officials from Malaysia and Indonesia are helping our investigators in their interrogations," he said.

Private Indonesian TV station SCTV said on its Web site that one of the Indonesians, identified as Gun Gun Gunawan, was the younger brother of Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali.

Hambali, now in US custody, is accused of masterminding a series of attacks in the region, including last year's Bali bombings that killed more than 200 people and last month's car bombing at a luxury Jakarta Hotel that killed 12.

He was arrested on Aug. 11 in Thailand by Thai police and US agents before being flown to an undisclosed location.

Another brother told SCTV Gun Gun went to Pakistan in 1999 to study religion and had not contacted the family since last year.

Hundreds of foreign students study in Karachi's Islamic seminaries. *Reuters*

ALL FOR VEGGIES

A Thai-Chinese monk decorates lanterns prior to a vegetarian festival at a Chinese temple in Chinatown, Bangkok. The festival lasts until Oct. 4. AFP

DEAL ON IRAQ

US dangles $8.5B carrot before Turkey

DUBAI—The United States on Monday granted Turkey a loan of up to $8.5 billion to help Ankara's economic reform program and soften the blow struck to its battered economy by the war in neighboring Iraq.

Announcing the loan on the sidelines of the IMF meeting in Dubai, US Treasury Secretary John Snow said Turkey must in return cooperate with the United States in Iraq.

But he insisted that the deal was in no way linked to possible Turkish military involvement in the country's reconstruction.

Washington has been pressing hard on Ankara to send troops to aid rebuilding the increasingly lawless Iraq, but the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has refrained from taking a decision due to strong objections at home.

"The purpose of the assistance is to support Turkey's ongoing economic reform process, and to mitigate the economic impact on Turkey related to Operation Iraqi Freedom," Snow said in a statement.

"It is in the US interests that Turkey maintain its economic stability and continue its ambitious economic and political reform process. The US assistance aims to reinforce the Turkish government's own economic policies," he added.

Turkey's economy is emerging from the worst crisis in its modern history, after turmoil in the banking sector sent markets plunging and investors fleeing the country in 2001.

But spurred by its drive to join the European Union, Erdogan's government has embarked on an ambitious economic reform program to bring the country's budget and inflation rates under control.

Turkey, an EU candidate since 1999, is the only one among 13 candidates which has yet to start membership talks with the Union. The EU has said it will decide in 2004 whether to start talks with Ankara.

Turkey, Nato's only Muslim member, has also been helped by a $16 billion stand-by credit deal extended by the IMF.

Snow praised the "great strides" made by Turkey in recovering from the crisis of 2001, saying the country's growth had been strong over the past year and a half, while inflation had returned to historic lows. *AFP*

UN chief says AIDS remains world epidemic

UNITED NATIONS—There's more money to spend on AIDS and drugs are cheaper but the disease is galloping faster than global efforts to stop it, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said on Monday.

Addressing 136 world leaders and ministers at a UN General Assembly session on AIDS, Annan said new reports made clear the world was woefully behind in meeting goals set at a Millennium Summit three years ago.

"We cannot claim that competing challenges are more important or more urgent," Annan said. "We cannot accept that 'something else came up' that forced us to place AIDS on the back burner. Something else will always come up."

The Millennium goals included having three million HIV-positive people in the developing world taking AIDS drugs by 2005 and halting and reversing the epidemic by 2015.

Only 300,000 people in developing nations now have access to drugs, although UN figures estimate that between 5 million and 6 million people have full-blown AIDS and need them.

Brazil, the only developing nation that provides treatment to all AIDS victims, accounts for a third of those receiving medicine. In sub-Sahara Africa, some 50,000 people receive medication out of 4.1 million who need it.

French President Jacques Chirac and World Health Organization Director General Dr. Lee Jong-Wook want the world to declare a global health emergency.

"We owe it to the victims of HIV/AIDS... to mobilize on an international scale," Chirac said.

Chirac is trying to get the Europian Union to donate $1 billion a year to an independent Global Fund for AIDS, tuberculosis and Malaria if the United States does the same. *Reuters*

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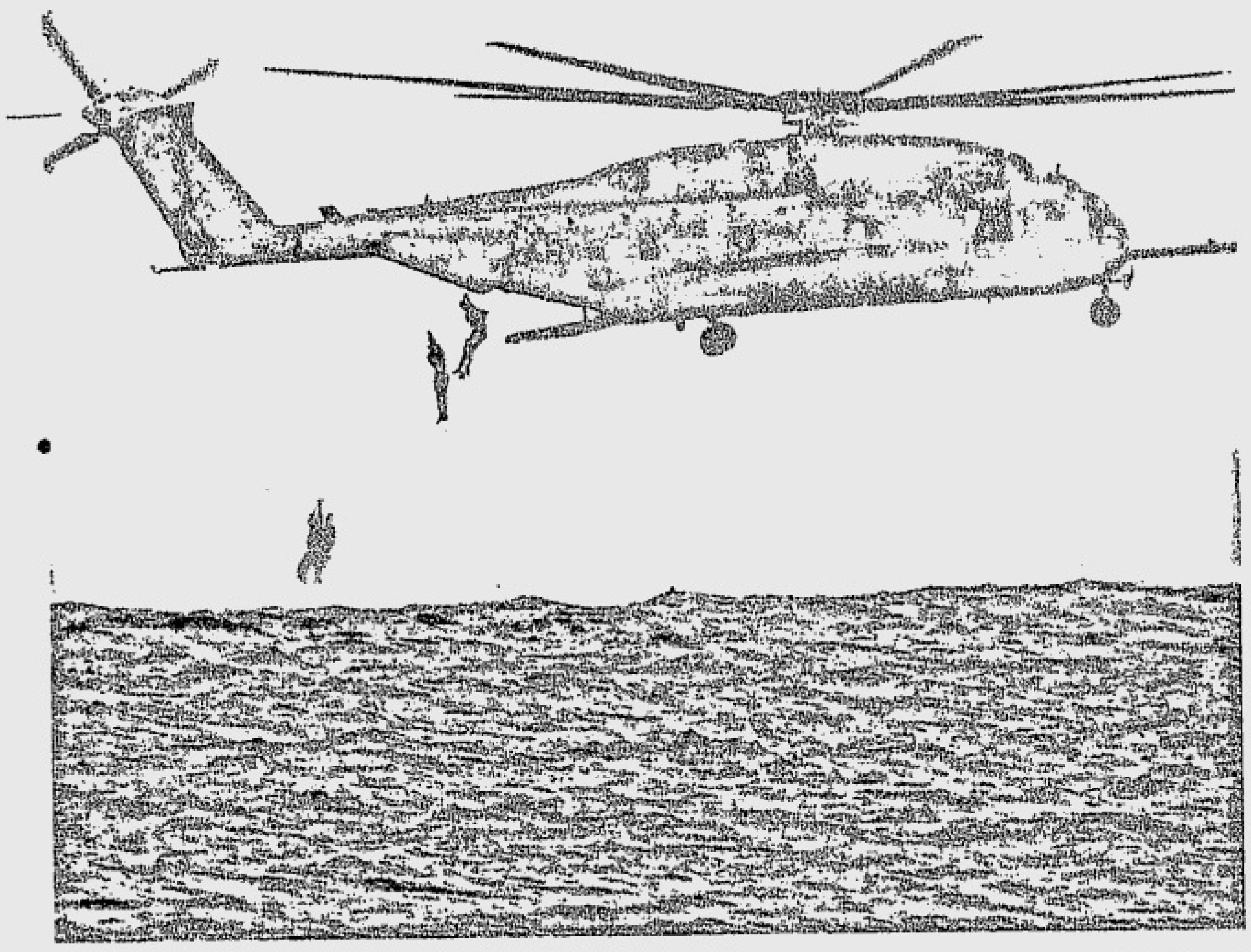

JUMP
Teams of US and Philippine soldiers jump from a CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter during joint RP-US war games in Ternate, Cavite.

ROMEO GACAD/AFP

Bodies of four activists found

DAVAO CITY—The bodies of four youth activists who went missing had been found in a quarry in Maco town in Compostela Valley.

The bodies of Lito Doydoy, 27, Anak Bayan community organizer; Marjorie Reynoso, 18, Anak Bayan coordinator; Jonathan Benaro, also a youth councilor of Barangay Mapaang, Maco; and Ramon Regase, 17, motorcycle driver, were found dumped in a quarry area in the said town yesterday noon.

Ariel Casilao, Karapatan secretary general, said the bodies bore stab wounds and torture marks, indicating the victims had been summarily executed.

Casilao said their suspicion about the involvement of the Military Intelligence Group (MIG) was boosted by fresh reports that one of those who dumped the bodies was Willy Javier, the same military intelligence asset tagged in the disappearance of the victims.

The military had denied involvement in the abduction and killing.

Casilao had earlier said that based on accounts of witnesses, a group headed by Javier, snatched the victims around 3:30 p.m. at the gate of the Hijo Plantation near Maco poblacion.

Casilao said the victims had attended a birthday party at the NCCC Mall in Tagum City and were on their way to Maco on board a single motorcycle when the armed men, on board a red and white Tamaraw FX vehicle, blocked their way and forced them to go with them.

He said two of the male victims tried to run away but the perpetrators shot their legs. After a few minutes, the armed men allegedly hauled the victims into the vehicle, leaving behind some of their belongings on the road.

However, Lt. Col. Agane Adriatico, chief of the military's 5th Civil Relations Group for Southeastern Mindanao, said MIG commander Maj. Allen Capuyan told him that Karapatan's allegation was baseless.

"Karapatan is always doing everything just to discredit the military," Adriatico, quoting Capuyan, said.

But despite the allegations, he said the military was helping the police in the investigation.

Adriatico said he has yet to check if Javier was really an MIG asset.

"With the dreadful events happening in our midst, we can attest (to) and foresee the alarming and continuous rise of human rights violations and more bloodshed (sic) of militants and members of progressive organizations are being persecuted under Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's strong republic," Casilao said.

Casilao said this year in Southern Mindanao alone there were already 432 cases of human rights violation with 13,064 victims.

"It is evident that blatant terrorism perpetrated by the state especially against innocent civilians and those who genuinely struggle for national democracy has long materialized," Casilao added.

He said Karapatan was already coordinating with the parents of the victims for the filing of charges.

Casilao said militants would also stage protests until the case is solved.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

Marijuana uprooted

COTABATO CITY—Government troops uprooted some 6,500 marijuana plants in a raid on an alleged Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)-controlled village in Carmen, North Cotabato on Sunday. Col. Romeo Ayson, chief of the Army's 38th Infantry Battalion, said the abandoned marijuana plantation, located in Barangay Pentangan, was being maintained by an armed group believed to be MILF members. Ayson said plantation guards escaped minutes before they raided the 1.5-hectare plantation. The uprooted plants will be burned at the headquarters of 602nd Infantry Brigade in Poblacion Carmen.

Rosa-May de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau

More marijuana seized

ILAGAN, Isabela—Police uprooted at least 200 marijuana plants worth P1.5 million in a farm in Sitio Iddag, Barangay Minagbag, Quezon town last week. Senior Supt. Nelson Nario, Isabela police director, said police, however, failed to arrest any cultivator in the plantation. Nario said they discovered the plantation through information relayed by members of the Barangay Information Network, a project launched by the police and local officials to stop crime in villages in the province.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Board member proclaimed

DAGUPAN CITY—Seven months to the May 2004 elections, the Commission on Elections has proclaimed Nestor Pulido as the elected provincial board member of the first district of Pangasinan. In an *en banc* resolution dated Sept. 11, the Comelec upheld its first division resolution declaring Pulido as the winner over Ariel de Guzman. The poll body said Pulido, husband of Anda Mayor Alice Pulido, garnered 40,336 votes while De Guzman got 40,263 votes. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Batanes now on-line

ITBAYAT, Batanes—The country's northernmost town is finally on-line with the launching Wednesday of its Internet project. Demy Narag, executive director of the Basco-based Ivatan Foundation for Development Communications Inc., said the project completes IFDCI's program to provide the province's six towns with access to the provincial government through the latest modern communications technology. The foundation that started the telephone system linking Batanes to the outside world was established in 1997 through the initiative of Rep. Florencio Abad.

Juliet Cataluña, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT is exactly 499 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

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4 TOYOTA ALTIS
4 ₱30,000 each for Store/Outlet winners
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8 ₱20,000 each for Store/Outlet winners
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Cigarette smoking is dangerous to health.

Vibal Publishing House, Inc (VP

a premiere name in educational publishing, will showcase its newest products at the 2003 National Convention of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) that kicks off today at the Manila Hotel. As it caps the yearlong observance of its 50th anniversary in the publishing industry, VPHI reaffirms its commitment to product quality. Through its participation in this year's CEAP convention, VPHI pays tribute to the Catholic educators who share the same vision—and passion—for excellence in education.

Passion

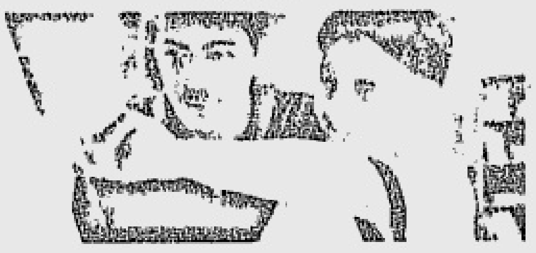
VPHI moves onwards in its journey onto its next 50 years as a stalwart in the field of educational publishing with a stronger-than-ever commitment to its clientele, best expressed in a new campaign that bears the tagline "Passion for Education."

"Passion for Education" aptly describes the spirit, fervor, and enthusiasm for teaching and learning that the company has inspired all these years among the people whose lives it touches: students, educators, parents, authors, as well as its employees.

The launching of VPHI's "Passion for Education" campaign ushers in a more progressive, dynamic and people-oriented outlook for the company.

The new tagline is accompanied by inspiring photos of people who exemplify "passion for education." It highlights the human factor behind VPHI's tradition of excellence by focusing on the people behind its quality educational products as well as those to whom these products are targeted.

Passion for Education...as seen in every teacher's noble mission to educate the youth.



Passion for Education... as seen in every parents' desire to provide their children with the best education possible.

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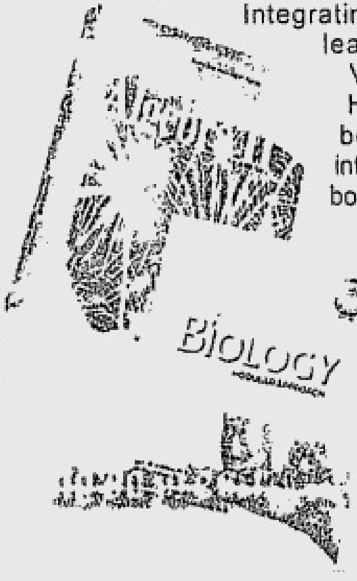
VPHI is launching five Golden Anniversary Series on the occasion of the CEAP National Convention at the Manila Hotel this September 24 to 26.

VPHI's new Christian Living (CL) series **We Celebrate God's Love I-IV** will be launched as delegates start to arrive. Using the Integral Formation Approach and patterned after VPHI's best selling grade school CL series, this new series presents the essentials of the Bible and Church teachings with interplay of Filipino experiences in an up-to-date and systematic exposition and a view toward social transformation.

New Trends in Math I-IV, the first mathematics series for high school that conforms to the Basic Education Curriculum (BEC), will also be launched. This series is geared for a linear, sequential and functional high school math program, complete with teacher's support materials: lesson plans and answer keys.

Makabayan
Makabayan
Tungo sa Globalisasyon

At the Fellowship Dinner, VPHI will hold a short program where it will launch its **Makabayan series for grade school and high school**. These series were crafted in the tradition of VPHI's best selling IBIL and Araling Panlipunan series. Integrating the required learning areas of Values, MAPEH, HELE /TLE, the books promote interactive and collaborative teaching and learning. Makabayan integration maps are provided in the grade school teacher's manuals while interdisciplinary thematic lessons are used as unit enders in high school.



"An instructional breakthrough in S&T education." That's how the authors describe the **S&T Modular Approach Series** that will be launched at VPHI's Function Room within the lunch break of Day 2 of the convention. By using the modular approach, the teacher can take up the modules based on his/her preferred sequence. The division of learning units in the four-color textbooks also promotes self-study. Respected science educators who authored the series will sign special edition of the books to be given to invited guests at the launching.

Earlier this year, VPHI launched its newest reading and language textbook series, **Across Borders through Reading (ABRE)** and **Across Borders through Language (ABLA).** These tandem series for grade school boast of integration across the curriculum with chapter themes that stimulate awareness in science, the arts and various topics.

VPHI

What better way to demonstrate the tradition of quality of VPHI's educational materials than to showcase the company's 10 most successful series. The wide acceptance by educators of these series, which translates to millions of copies sold, reflects the passion of VPHI's authors and editorial staff in crafting excellent instructional materials.

Language Arts

Espousing the traditional-but-proven-effective situational structural approach in teaching English, **Language Arts** continues to help many teachers effectively teach grammar, writing, listening and speaking skills. *As an anniversary offering, VPHI recently launched a new language worktext series (ABLA) attuned to the BEC but with the same well-loved approach as that in Language Arts.*

Science & Health FOR A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Science has always been one of the company's strong subjects from the very beginning; a feat credited to **Science in Schools**, VPHI's first educational publication. In fact, many educators continue to depend on VPHI's science series like **Science and Health for a Changing Environment.** Each worktext in this series makes science and health an integral part of the learners' lives through its process-oriented approach.

The acronym **IBIL**, together with **OCOP**, its English counterpart, has stuck in the minds of Civics teachers and students. Now on its Third Edition, these twin series provide grade-schoolers invaluable lessons in Philippine history, geography, civics and culture–indispensable ingredients in influencing the youth to become nationalistic, progressive and freedom-loving citizens.

This Christian Living textbook series was a pioneer in weaving Creed, Cult and Code in an integrated, well-organized language pattern that is suited for the student's age and experience level. This series succeeds in inspiring learners from Preschool to Grade 6 to live the Catholic faith. Already on its Second Edition, the series is so successful that it generated a high school sequel.

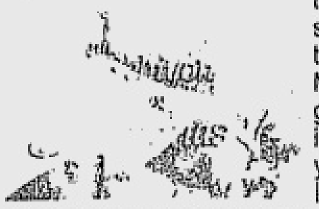
VPHI is proud of this first Filipino-crafted worktext series for computer education. **Computer Adventure** breaks new ground in computer learning through an innovative approach that is both interactive and task-based. More and more computer teachers are discovering that computer education becomes an exciting adventure for grade-schoolers through this series.

"A rich resource of literary gems—from the well-loved Filipino works to the widely-acclaimed classics, it succeeds in making literature less intimidating and therefore, easier to understand and appreciate." This is how a teacher describes **Language in Literature,** a high school series that effectively integrates the teaching of language and literature without compromising one or the other.

Teaching Social Studies or Makabayan is always interesting and challenging given the colorful backdrop of national and global events. VPHI's twin series for Araling Panlipunan (Filipino and English editions) stimulate inquisitive minds through comprehensive discussion of history and socio-political and economic issues. *As an anniversary offering, VPHI is launching its Makabayan series for high school with interdisciplinary thematic lessons.*

This series has a strong following among science educators, so well-loved that they eagerly await the series' next edition. And for a valid reason, too, because the series effectively presents S&T principles and concepts. *As an anniversary offering, VPHI is launching its four-color S&T series in the modular approach.*

Linking Catholic teachings to true-to-life situations and everyday experiences that confront the youth of today makes VPHI's Christian Living an enduring series. It is a valuable tool for the CLE teacher in helping the Filipino students understand, communicate and live Christ's message. *As an anniversary offering, VPHI is launching its new CL series for high school.*



This video series is VPHI's first multimedia product. Made up of six VHS tapes showcasing the country's 16 regions, the video package supplements the teaching of Makabayan to grade school, including first year high school. It succeeds in presenting the Philippines as a diverse country through moving images.

With copyrights ranging from the late 1980's to 2002, these 10 most successful series of VPHI attest to the strength of the company's trademark of quality and its heritage.

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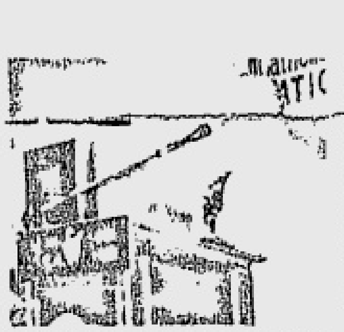
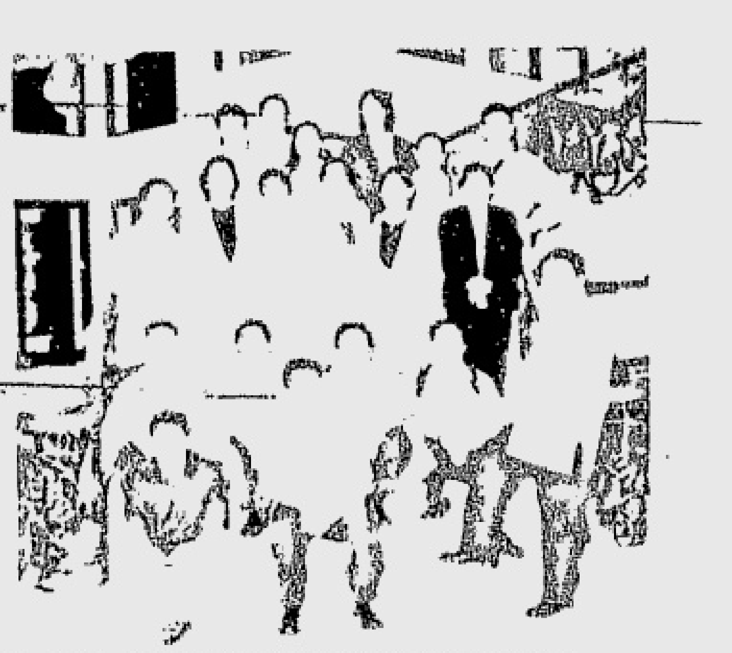
Faces in last year's CEAP National Convention held in Cagayan de Oro City. Now we meet again

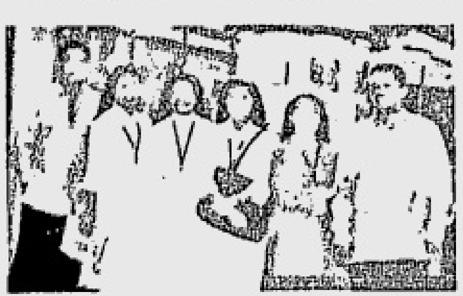


DepEd Secretary Edilberto de Jesus addresses the CEAP delegates

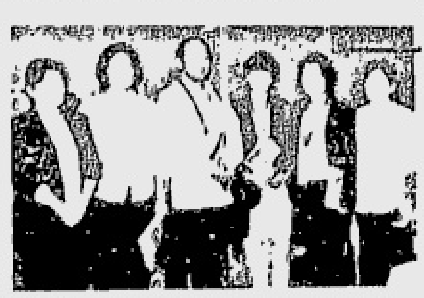
What's news? Mo. Assumpta David of UIC-Davao (center) catches up with other delegates



The indefatigable VPHI contingent to the CEAP 2002 for the early kick off of VIBAL@50 shebang

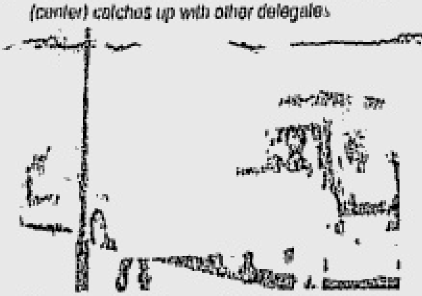


Friends from various Catholic schools at the VPHI booth



VPHI's Vice President & Gen. Manager Nila V. Mate poses with delegates at the VPHI booth

Visitors enjoy coffee at the Vibal function room



VPHI treats the delegates to a tour of the famous pineapple plantations in nearby Bukidnon

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Challenge to Bush

EDITORIAL

AS the presidential election fever in the United States heats up, a new face has emerged to excite at least the Democratic party. Gen. Wesley Clark, 58, former commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and a Rhodes scholar, has entered the primaries which start the screening process of the party's presidential candidate.

Clark's entry has shaken up the lethargic Democratic camp, which had been demoralized by the overwhelming public opinion support for President George W. Bush's war on Iraq. Clark is regarded as credible challenge to Bush's credentials as a wartime president.

Clark, a late entrant in the race, has won the endorsement of former President Bill Clinton, who recently mounted an attack on the economic record of the Bush administration. His entry into the race has reinvigorated the chances of the Democrats in capturing the White House. He has been described as the "the man on the white horse" who can unhinge Bush's claims to American patriotism which he galvanized behind his war policy. Clinton has described him as the "star" of the Democratic Party.

Clark is the most charismatic among the Democratic politicians who have declared their intention to contest the president. Before he arrived on the scene, the group of Democratic contenders was a lackluster lot. Some of them even supported the congressional resolution authorizing Bush to go to war against Iraq. Although Clark is a newcomer in politics and his views on domestic issues are not well known, he is among the Democrats, who has drawn a contrast between Bush and himself over the issue of the war on Iraq, without inviting criticism over his patriotic leanings.

It is too early to say whether his candidacy will survive the bruising primaries or fizzle out. But he has made it clear that he would present himself as one of the sharpest critics of the war on Iraq.

In an interview with the New York Times, Clark said he would probably oppose Bush's request for $87 billion to finance the reconstruction of Iraq. He has stirred up controversy by declaring that he would have voted for the congressional resolution authorizing war on Iraq but this should have contained a provision requiring Bush to seek Congress' approval before invading that country.

Clark has attacked Bush's decision to go to war on the basis of the claim that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. This claim has come under sharp criticism after US arms experts failed to find such weapons. Clark has said: "We are going to ask, 'Why are we engaged in Iraq, Mr. President—tell the truth.'"

Bush's popularity has been falling, despite the swift military victory in Iraq. Criticism of his management of the economy has been growing and concern is mounting over the frequent attacks on American forces by Iraqi guerrillas. A recent intelligence report says hostility is rising among the Iraqi population against the United States and the occupation troops.

Clark's military credentials are well-established. He commanded the United Nations' military forces in Kosovo, which became the subject of his 2001 book, "Waging Modern War." By throwing his hat into the political ring, Clark is offering himself as an alternative to Bush on a defining issue: Bush's credentials as a wartime president.

Before the emergence of Clark, Bush's reelection had been widely predicted, but post-war Iraq and the weak US economy are looming as major issues in the 2004 elections. These issues are injecting life into the moribund Democratic opposition. The US presidential campaign has been rescued from boredom.

Scandal in Cancun

FOREIGN COMMENT

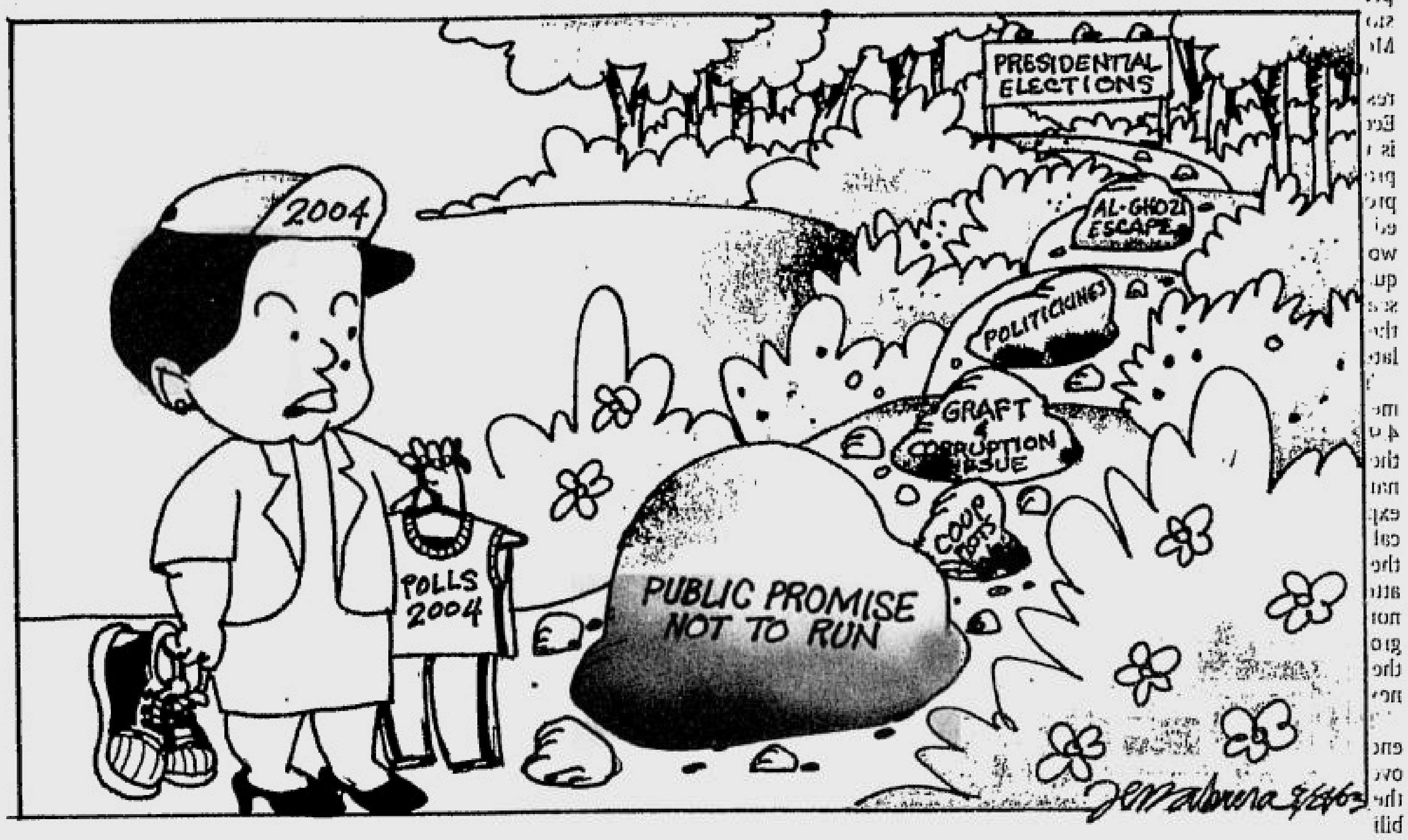
THE WORLD Trade Organization is in crisis after 146 member countries failed to agree on a free trade agreement in Cancun. During the four days of talks, the superpowers—the European Union and the United States—were obviously surprised that a joint coalition of middle-income and developing countries stood firmly together.

The frightening scenario for the EU, as well as global trade, is that the United States has decided to distance itself from the WTO, focusing instead on making bilateral agreements with trading partners.

It is neither the EU, the United States or the WTO that stand as the biggest losers. Instead some 144 million people in the developing world do. According to the World Bank, they would have their standard of living improved noticeably with a free trade agreement.

That is the real scandal of the failure in Cancun.

Posten (Copenhagen, Denmark)



Dictatorship by the party

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE DANGERS of a parliamentary system of government is now evident even before the Constitution can be amended. Would you believe that Vice President Teofisto Guingona, the president of Lakas, the party in power, is being ousted from the party he heads? Another Lakas member, Bulacan Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo Jr., is also being ousted for suggesting that President Macapagal-Arroyo and husband Mike should go into a separation of property to spare the President from being dragged into the money laundering charges leveled against the First Gentleman. Gunigundo did not suggest the legal separation of the controversial couple, only the separation of their properties to make it clear who owns what. For that well-meaning suggestion, he is being kicked out of his party.

Who is doing the kicking of the two party members? A mere presidential adviser who is not even an original member of Lakas. A mere adviser working for the ouster of the party president? Only in the Philippines.

If the party can do this to the country's Vice President, the person who will succeed the President if anything happens to her, imagine what the party can do in a parliamentary system.

In a parliamentary government, the party is supreme. The reins of government go to the party that elects the most number of candidates to Parliament. Then the party members elect from among themselves the prime minister, the head of government, the counterpart of the President under our present presidential system. Cabinet members will also be chosen from party members in Parliament. The members of Parliament (MPs), the counterpart of today's congressmen, will be both legislators and the top government executives. Thus, the people are deprived of the right to choose the prime minister who would rule them.

Dissent and freedom of opinion and expression will be stifled. Everybody has to dance to the party tune. Anybody who is out of step will be disciplined. Nobody can say a contrary opinion, even if the free exchange of opinion and ideas is the hallmark of democracy. The whole government will be run collectively by the party. Thus, it is as if we would be back to martial law, except that there would not be only one dictator but many. Do we want that?

The congressmen and presidential advisers who are pushing Charter amendments for a shift to the parliamentary system are not explaining everything to the people. They just keep mouthing the refrain that the parliamentary system will be good for the country as it will remove the gridlock between the Senate and the House in enacting laws. Wrong.

When you have only one legislature, the congressional railroad will run faster. Laws good for the party and bad for the people can be rushed through the legislative mill. There will be no Senate to check the abuses of the House. There will be no checks and balances. Imagine all the onerous laws that the present House could have passed without the presence of the Senate.

In the second place, we don't need more laws but less of it. We already have too many laws, many of them contradictory, so that the people, including lawyers and judges, cannot keep track of them. Even Supreme Court justices, who have the last say on the interpretation of the laws, sometimes can't agree on what the laws mean. The whole government can't even enforce all of them. So people end up disobeying laws. And when you have a people with the bad habit of disobeying laws, the result is anarchy.

* * *

FOLLOW UP: 1. The National Book Store on Quezon Avenue, QC, has banned parking on the sidewalks on its side of Scout Borromeo. (PDI, 8/29/03) But Mercury Drug and Tropical Hut supermarket on the other side have not done anything to free their sidewalks of parked vehicles. Pedestrians are forced to walk on the street where they run the risk of being sideswiped by vehicles passing through this very busy road.

Like NBS, Mercury and Tropical Hut have their own private parking lots. Why do they use the sidewalks as if they own them?

The fruit stalls on the sidewalk between Mercury and Tropical Hut should also be moved back. Here's another instance of the Metro Manila Development Authority either forgetting the details or practicing favoritism. Other sidewalks have been cleared of vendors and parked vehicles, why not these?

* * *

2. The non-paying tenants being coddled by Manila Rep. Harry Angping have given up fighting ejectment from a four-story building in Sta. Cruz district. (PDI, 8/18/03) They have agreed to leave the building after they lost their case in the courts.

Two young businessmen, Marc Anthony Purisima and Heinrich Suson, had bought the foreclosed property from the Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB), but Angping, using his power as a congressman, delayed for five years the signing of the absolute deed of sale for the property by the PVB, threatening the bank with a congressional investigation. Finally, the Supreme Court put its foot down and ordered the transfer of the property to the two buyers who have long paid the purchase price in full.

Angping is again in trouble with City Hall, for illegally sending a number of barangay captains on a holiday to Hong Kong. The free trip, complete with pocket money, was obviously in aid of Angping's reelection. He will face Mayor Lito Atienza's councilor-son in the congressional elections next year.

Interesting things

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I HEARD several interesting things at the Copa meeting last week.

The first was pointed out by an army surgeon. The No. 1 problem of the troops, he said, was demoralization, and the source of their demoralization was not even being able to afford medicines. How can you think of hurling yourself at the enemy when your wife calls you in the middle of the night while you grovel in some godforsaken place to tell you your youngest child is sick and there's no money for medicine? You do not earn enough and you have no health benefits. The money for you has been stolen by your superiors and your own superiors in government.

Your instinct will be self-preservation. The last thing you'll do is risk your life for God and country. The first thing you'll do is stay alive for wife and children. "Theirs but to do and die" you leave to PMA graduates.

The second was pointed out by a teacher. You want to see a picture of misery, he said, turn your gaze on the teachers, especially the public school ones. There you'll see even worse levels of abjectness. Teachers take home even less pay than soldiers, have even less benefits than soldiers, and can't complain like soldiers. At least the problems of soldiers are now being talked about because of the threat of coups. Soldiers have guns and can sell fear, teachers have only knowledge and can sell only *tocino*. We want to help anyone, we should begin with the teachers. We want to reform anything, we should begin with education.

The last was pointed out by a Muslim leader. You want to see a still more mind-boggling picture of misery, he said, look at the Muslims of Mindanao. They're the ones who are crippled with neglect. The percentage of Metro Manila kids who are able to finish elementary education is more than two-thirds, the percentage of Muslim kids who are able to do so is only one-third. Many parts of Muslim Mindanao lack food and potable water. The fabulous sums that are reported in media to have been lavished on the area never got there. Where they went only government officials—and not just those involved in Muslim affairs—know.

What Muslim Mindanao needs are food and knowledge. What government gives are guns and bullets. What Muslim Mindanao needs are economic uplift and education, what government gives are politics and war.

I sympathize with the plight of the soldiers. I myself have friends whose relatives are foot soldiers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines. They have every reason to be bitter and complain about their oppression. Even soldiers, who are taught only to obey, retain the right to think. They have a right to see who their real enemies are. They are not the manufactured ones who pose no threat to them, they are the real ones who steal their lives and their future.

But curbing corruption in the AFP, or in government itself, is only part of the solution. In fact, the problem exists only because the AFP is bloated. It is far bigger than is needed by a country that reels under poverty and ignorance. We want to give emergency employment, let us give emergency employment elsewhere, not in the AFP, or the Cafgu. That is dangerous in the extreme. The cause-and-effect is not: We have many enemies, that is why we have a huge military. The cause-and-effect is: We have a huge military, that is why we have many enemies. A huge military creates its own excuse for being. It has to have enemies to have a reason to exist. Even if it has to create them.

The only real solution there is to reduce the AFP—even more so, the Philippine National Police—to a small force and pay the remaining troops well.

And give absolute priority to food and knowledge. The real terrorists in this country are not Al-Ghozi and the Abu Sayyaf, they are hunger and benightedness. The last two are the ones throwing the land in darkness, sowing hatred and strife among the citizens.

I said before that I couldn't understand why we give in to restive soldiers too much, thinking they hold a gun to our head. You want to know who really holds a gun to our head, don't look at the soldiers, look at the teachers. The gun they hold to our head may not be visible, but it is no less real. And it kills just as well as the ones the soldiers carry. Far more so. Think about it: It's the teachers to whom we entrust the minds of our kids, to whom we give the power to shape the way they will think. The soldiers get disillusioned and bitter, they can only mount a power grab and be repulsed. The teachers get disillusioned and bitter, they can disillusion and embitter the minds of our kids, or warp them beyond repair. It is a testament to the extent of our own ignorance and benightedness that we cannot see who poses the graver threat.

But never mind the threat they pose, mind only the service they perform. Can any group of people in this country be more deserving of having their lot in life uplifted, and having their importance trumpeted before the heavens?

The Muslim leader was right, but his observations apply not just to Muslim Mindanao—though arguably, it cries out for help from sheer neglect and lack of understanding—but to the country as a whole. Stopping corruption doesn't just mean stopping officials, military or civilian from stealing money or specifically money that should go to the troops; it is stopping the corruption of our thinking, our values, our sense of priorities. That is what causes the other kind of corruption to happen, the one that is visible to the naked eye. That is the rot we need to banish from our midst.

Some interesting things are also very urgent things.

Disturbing signs and signals

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE CONCERN of global financial institutions over the Philippine political outlook is rising in tempo as the country approaches the 2004 presidential elections. The latest of this expression of concern comes from the International Monetary Fund.

Over the weekend, Vikram Haksar, the IMF's resident representative, amplified the IMF World Economic Outlook report, saying that the country is unlikely to improve on the 4 percent growth projected this year. He attributed the growth prospects to political uncertainty partly associated with the elections. While he said that growth would be driven mainly by domestic demand, he qualified that strong dollar remittances by Overseas Filipino workers could not compensate for the downside in the form of the "uncertainty related to the election period."

The IMF's forecast is lower than the government's 4.2-5.2 percent target this year, and the 4.9 to 5.5 percent for next year. Its forecast echoes the predictions of a number of independent financial institutions and risk analysts which have expressed their anxieties over the wave of political turbulence that has shaken the country during the past few months, most of all the July 27 coup attempt. The IMF outlook report cannot be ignored, and its release sends a message that growth prospects could further be damaged if these uncertainties are not cleared before the next elections.

The IMF was tactful enough in avoiding reference to the coup rumors and the political debate over corruption allegations being investigated by the Senate as factors adding fuel to political instability and uncertainty. Several uncertainties loom ahead of elections. The first is the question of whether President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is going back on her word not to run again. The second is the configuration of presidential contenders, the uncertainty of which breeds speculation over political continuity and leadership, let alone the continuance of economic policy.

The cloud over the President's political plans can be more destabilizing than the sustained attacks on alleged corruption to which her husband, Mike Arroyo, and her former political associates—e.g., former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez—have been linked. The IMF report, while couched in diplomatic language, is as much an expression of concern over the volatility of the Philippine political system and the disruptive effect of unbridled electioneering.

The third uncertainty is whether the prospects of the President submitting herself to electoral test in 2004 will dampen unrest in the Armed Forces, which is manifested by the proliferation of reports of coup plots.

Anxiety in the business sector is reflected in the weakening peso, which is expected to slide further, and in the gloomy mood in investment circles. The Board of Investments has predicted fewer local and foreign investments this year because of the unstable political climate that followed such events as the SARS epidemic in Asia early this year and the invasion of Iraq last year.

Theoretically, elections are a stabilizing event and an occasion for political renewal, because they give a popular mandate to a new leader. But in the Philippines, elections do not provide a clue to how the next government or its economic policies would be like. From the narrowing list of presidential contenders, all an investor, a businessman and the public have is a list of names without any idea of what political and economic policies they stand for.

The political party, as the mechanism that crystallizes policies and programs, has long ceased to define the philosophical complexion of a presidential contender. The political party, as the vehicle for clarifying the direction and priorities of the next administration, has been supplanted by other mechanisms.

Among these are the coup plots, individuals whose base for launching candidature for high public office is celebrity status. Investors and businessmen are dying to know what's in store for them in terms of predictability and long-term planning after 2004. No one can draw a road map on economic direction on the basis of names trotted up by public opinion polls. Businessmen cannot draw plans on the basis of the common denominator, which propels the presidential campaigns of most potential contenders; that is, the controversy that arises from corruption charges. No president of this country can run government on the back of corruption issues. The public can throw out an administration because of corruption scandals, and the army could overthrow a regime because of corruption. But the presidency is about managing a country well and moving it forward—away from the hole of corruption-dominated national agenda.

If the presidential campaign of any one is to ride on the corruption issue, then there is no way for the public or the business community to determine the difference between Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Raul Roco and Eduardo Cojuangco, and some show-biz celebrities; and it would be hard to expect that the 2004 elections would be a defining moment for policy-based campaign. Since the elections are headed for another popularity contest, more than it is a contest of ideas and policies, there is little hope that the next elections will be the turning point for the introduction of innovative ideas.

News from the war front

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DESPITE the skepticism of many, supporters of the Reproductive Health Care Bills—HB 4110 and SB 2325—are still pushing for the passage of these legislative initiatives in the face of a concerted campaign against them.

But what dismays both the sponsors of the bills in the House and in the Senate, as well as the NGOs, especially women's groups anxiously monitoring the progress of the bills, is that barriers against the bill's passage are being thrown not just through open, democratic debate, but also through underhanded, sneaky tactics.

In response to the demands of the authors that the House Committee on Health pursue its hearings on the controversial bill, Committee Chair Rep. Antonio Yapha Jr. has promised to convene an Executive Session on this measure on Oct. 7. But a few days ago, Representative Yapha released an agenda that, in the words of one observer, "could spell disaster for the intended Executive Session."

What the representative from the third district of Cebu wants to take up in the Oct. 7 meeting is not the bill, which has undergone public meetings and deliberations already, but a letter by Representative Kintanar of the second district of Cebu where he questions the decision of the Committee to conduct an Executive Session. So technically, what will be held on Oct. 7 is not an Executive Session but a Committee meeting to "decide" whether or not there should be an Executive Session.

Clearly, this is a delaying tactic, since conventional wisdom has it that most legislative matters ground to a halt around this time, about six months before elections, since our congressional representatives and senators would be too busy campaigning.

Interest in the progress of the bills has been high, with well-attended public hearings, where the points raised by those opposing the measure have been substantially answered to the satisfaction of the committee members. Support among the rest of the House members also seems strong. But through tactics such as the delayed committee hearings, it seems that those against the bill—inside as well as outside the House—will succeed in "killing" it at the committee level.

* * *

BUT not if women will have their way.

The women of Likhaan, a service delivery NGO that works with women in impoverished communities, have issued an appeal to public officials, as well as to the public at large, to support the right of women, especially poor women, to access to the full range of reproductive health services and to make responsible decisions and choices for themselves.

Here's Likhaan's statement in full:

"In the midst of political intrigues wafting in the air as campaign season nears, another equally insidious and potentially explosive scheme is in the works and for a much longer period.

"This is Oplan Ban All Artificial Contraceptives, an intense, no-stops campaign, orchestrated by a bigoted, self-righteous faction of the Catholic Church. It currently goes under the cover of a demolition job on the Reproductive Health bills—HB 4110 and SB 2325—bills that allegedly legalize abortion and (promote) sexual promiscuity. But the bigger theme veiled under the fabricated and vicious attacks is the supposition that all 'non-natural' methods of averting pregnancy are contrary to God's will and therefore against the law.

"The most disturbing policy propositions coming out of this view are Sen. Serge Osmeña's bill banning the contraceptive pill, injectables and IUD for being 'abortifacient,' and Representative Jaraula's bill that goes beyond the Constitution by declaring that 'life begins with fertilization.'

"Urban poor women and women's NGOs trust that when passed into law, the Reproductive Health bill will protect women from the moralist schemes that should be strictly confined to one's religion, and not public policies.

"If passed into law, the Reproductive Health Act will protect 7.5 million users, six million of whom are Catholics, against the sinister objective of banning contraceptives."

* * *

WOMEN who profess indifference to the issue, or think this is just so much politics, should realize that moves to limit our contraceptive choices are even now making the rounds in our legislature.

I know it seems like a distant possibility, but I would urge all women to begin to imagine what their life would be like if they could no longer decide for themselves whether, when, and how often they would get pregnant.

Imagine not being able to get a prescription for contraceptive pills, use injectable contraceptives or have an IUD inserted for the simple reason that these would be unavailable in drugstores or clinics.

Upper- and middle-class women, especially young women, nowadays take contraception for granted. But I can still remember the time when a women's magazine created quite a splash when it sent two single young women around Manila's drugstores to see if they could buy contraceptive pills over-the-counter. In those days, some drugstores and even doctors demanded for proof of marriage before dispensing contraceptives. By the time I was starting my family, such fears were largely dispelled, and I had always assumed women of my daughter's generation would enjoy the same, if not more, freedom of choice when it came to making reproductive decisions.

But thanks to legislators like Representatives Yapha, Kintanar and Jaraula and Sen. Serge Osmeña, we can no longer make such assumptions. With their cooperation, what some people have called "the Taliban of the Catholic church" would be able to impose on Filipino women a social order that will imprison us behind the "burqa" of repression, shame and male control.

Anitos

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

FERNANDO Amorsolo painted so many pretty historical pictures depicting the earliest contact between the Spaniards and Filipinos in the 16th century. These paintings have been reproduced so much on calendars and textbooks that they have entered our consciousness. While we know that Amorsolo read, among other sources, Pigafetta's account of the Magellan expedition and used these in his work, I have been rethinking Amorsolo's images of sun-burned (sometimes topless) pre-colonial maidens making offerings to pre-colonial gods or *anitos*.

Amorsolo created an ideal pre-colonial past, a paradise lost that the Spaniards found when they came to our shores. Since Amorsolo is not an academic historian, he should not be unfairly judged with hindsight and the benefit of recent research in history, anthropology and archeology. Yet the whole idea of a lost paradise is very engaging. If you looked at Amorsolo's "historical" paintings, you would be led to believe that there were no old or ugly people in the pre-colonial past.

Just recently I was thinking of two famous Amorsolo canvasses—"The Offering" and "Burning of the Idols." As I was rereading the accounts of Pigafetta and Pedro Chirino, I was made curious about the *anitos* that were burned when people converted to Christianity. What did these idols look like? If only our museums had a collection of *anitos*, we would understand our past better and, perhaps, see some relation with the present and the way Filipino Catholics treat religious images.

Pigafetta narrates how the baptism in Cebu resulted in 800 heathen souls converted to Christianity. It is the wife of Humabon, given the name Juana (after Juana, the mad mother of Charles V), that fascinates me. She was given an image of the Santo Niño that is venerated in Cebu to this day. What were her old idols like? Were these *anitos* as cute as the Santo Niño she probably treated like a Barbie doll?

Magellan appealed to the people to destroy their *anitos*. When Magellan asked "...why they did not burn their idols as they had promised when they became Christians, they replied that what they were doing was not for themselves, but for a sick man who had not spoken now for four days, so that the idols might give him health. He was the prince's brother, and the bravest and wisest man in the island. The captain told them to burn their idols and to believe in Christ, and that if the sick man were baptized, he would quickly recover; and if that did not happen they could behead him [i.e. Magellan] then and there. Thereupon, the king replied that he would do it, for he truly believed in Christ.

"We made a procession from the square to the house of the sick man with as much pomp as possible. There we found him in such condition that he could neither speak nor move. We baptized him and his two wives and daughters. Then the captain asked him how he felt. He spoke immediately and said that by the grace of Our Lord he felt very well... Before five days the sick man began to walk.

"He had an idol that certain old women had concealed in his house burned in the presence of the king and all the people. He had many shrines along the seashore destroyed, in which consecrated meat was eaten. The people themselves cried out 'Castiglia! Castiglia!' and destroyed those shrines. They said that if God would lend them life they would burn all the idols that they could find, even if they were in the king's house. Those idols are made of wood, and are hollow, and lack the back parts. Their arms are open and their feet turned up under them with the legs open. They have a large face with four huge tusks like those of the wild boar; and are painted all over."

Were the old women who hid the *anito* in the house *catalonans* or *babaylanes*? Or maybe old relatives? Why did people shout "Castiglia!" before smashing a shrine or idol? Were they saying the Spaniards made them do it? Furthermore, why borrow life from the Christian God before the search and destroy operation on *anitos*? The document has to be re-read in order to understand what happened.

Decades later, the Jesuit Pedro Chirino reported on the "plague of idolatry" in his mission station in Taytay. The pattern is similar to that in Cebu in 1521. Priestesses, idols used to cure the sick, and converted heathens burning the remnants of their old religion:

"In the town there was a band of worthless women, of the *Catalonans*... These in secret maintained a tyrannical hold upon the village by various means and plots compelling many to repair to them upon every occasion, as they formerly did before they became Christians.

Among these women, one who was a leader claimed that her *anito* was a very close friend of the *anito* of the Christians and had descended to the earth from heaven. This woman most stirred up the fire on account of the power that she wielded, not only on account of the sagacity that she certainly possessed, but by her influence and reputation in the village. By these means she was, on the one hand, powerful enough to draw to her the weak and, on the other, to compel the more influential to dissemble with her, and to refrain from betraying her for fear of exposing themselves to risk."

The encounter between two worlds was also a war between two religions. Conclusion on Friday.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Another one for Edsa

COMMENTARY

Sylvia L. Mayuga

PROVOKED by her lovely new piece on Edsa '86, fellow writer Gemma Nemenzo and I were enjoying an e-mail exchange on whether or not it was a "bogus miracle" when suddenly, life turned our chat into a public show-and-tell.

It began when National Bureau of Investigation agents swooped into the Tibayan Group of Companies' main offices in Las Piñas, past noon of Feb. 7. With only a search warrant, they made off with office equipment and six employees leeringly "invited for questioning" at the NBI compound. In a society where unequal distribution of wealth and power remains the root of daily tragedy, government agents, acting as goons for private interests, are likely to make a news audience long numbed by injustice flip yawning to the sports and movie pages.

I did not have that luxury. My sister-in-law Josie swept in late Friday evening, saying that her 26-year-old daughter was among those picked up in lieu of the missing big boss Jesus Tibayan. He is Josie's younger brother but she knew neither his whereabouts nor a lawyer to call.

Too late for two females to enter the belly of the beast looking for their young little sleep. On Saturday, we learned: employees, whose experience of crime was hitherto confined to news, movies and snatched cell phones, had been bullied into illegal detention. Sans warrant of arrest, psywar's empty threats, half-truths, outright lies and mauling of the resistant quickly turned the "invitation" into signatures on "criminal arrest" forms "legalizing" detention. Worse, two lawyers gave advice for reasons the detainees could not grasp, "This is SOP. Sign so that your arrest is documented."

They had become hostages to smoke out Jess Tibayan. I knew him only from his sister's stories but, with pensioners, overseas workers and other plain folk, this 34-year-old financial wunderkind of grassroots origin had given me two years of serene writing time with monthly investment interest checks far more generous than bank rates. The checks stopped coming in January amid media brouhaha over "pyramid scams" in the unlicensed Multitel, Glasgow, MMG and MTST "investment houses." Then came media reports of an alleged, not yet announced SEC Cease and Desist Order (CDO) to the licensed Tibayan Group itself.

My earnest niece reviewed events with me: a rash of misinformed investor pullouts in December had seriously disturbed the companies' cash flow. No choice but to wait, slowly realizing that Jess had become a player big enough to make waves with his populist sympathies in a system rigidified by inequality under an Old Boys' Club. But the CDO was puzzling. Consulting with the SEC since early 2002, he had invited its audit. Confronted by misinformed panic, he downsized his work force by half, declared a moratorium on selling new shares and was awaiting a conference with the SEC on audit results. So why the CDO and illegal arrests?

Hair-raising answers were not long in coming, the first from Jess himself. He was saying SEC Chair Lilia Bautista was surprised by the NBI swoop when his voice trailed off into silence visited by rumors of his impending abduction by lawless lawmen. This was no comfort to five new detainees—two men keeping their presence of mind and three tearful women next taken to Las Piñas City Hall for an inquest Saturday afternoon. With resolution of charges awaiting Monday, unjust detention would continue in an "arrest" craftily timed for a weekend with lawyer friends out of reach. By now my niece was a near nervous wreck, a choice hostage badgered by more leering questions on her uncle's whereabouts.

Names of old Mabini comrades now too busy or distant to call in emergency floated through weekend-long brooding on the serious backslide on human rights restored by people power. Yet Edsa lives—under a radiant sun in cool air early Monday morning around the new Las Piñas Hall of Justice. Small, medium and large investors putting their financial worries aside for a moment came to surround the detainees, expressing trust in Tibayan and willingness to wait for clouds of intrigue and tyranny to disperse under heaven.

Bright ideas on crisis management bounced around while awaiting word on what turned out to be a complaint of *estafa* led by—surprise!—the same NBI agents who made the swoop, and by Yari Santos, a large investor/ex-general buddy of NBI director Wycoco. This cabal guilefully prodding more panicked investors to join them seems ready to grab company assets extra-legally as "settlement"—never mind the rest. *Por bida, martial law gangster movie na naman ini?*

A long dark journey into light peaked 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 10, with Prosecutor Cynthia Luang's resolution finding "no basis" for the arrest and ordering the detainees released, pending preliminary investigation on Feb. 24, right smack into Edsa's 17th anniversary. In the NBI's own fascist ritual, they were returned to its premises, threatened some more, and returned behind bars before foot-dragging officials released them at 8 p.m. *Ma drama ining* NBI.

The NBI has now been served notice of a case against it at the Ombudsman (lousy theater and worse fashion sense unfortunately not among the charges). Again, radiant people power is invited to surround the beast in new trial. From its lairs at the Taft Avenue and the environs of SEC lawyer Tomas Syquia (who recommended the CDO, now up for review), the NBI continues to spread disinformation in Tibayan's own continuing tactical silence.

This beast sired by the seven deadly sins and mothered by indifference to injustice is the same one twice defeated, all too briefly, at Edsa. It roams. But if "miracle" is indeed divine grace working through nature and history, I nominate Feb. 7-10, 2003 as a new entry in people power's book of victories. The promise holds: The meek shall inherit the earth.

Sylvia L. Mayuga is a veteran freelance writer on historical and cultural issues.

THEY SAID

Statesman

"A politician always thinks about the next election, while the statesman always thinks about the next generation. If you think of the next generation, then you can do a lot of change."

—Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra addressing local businessmen in a forum at a hotel in Makati City

Right to privacy

"I am a private citizen and I invoke my right to privacy."

—Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo's standard reply to senators at the joint Senate committee hearings on the Jose Pidal account

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Iggy's right to privacy backed up by Constitution

THIS letter refers to your news story, "Iggy faces contempt rap." (PDI, 9/10/03) In the said news headline, Sen. Edgardo Angara was quoted to have said that "the Supreme Court ruling upheld a Senate move to cite for contempt an uncooperative Frenchman. He was detained on orders of the chamber for refusing to identify a relative of then President Elpidio Quirino whom he allegedly bribed to pave the way for the sale of a government property in Novaliches."

If it was the 1950 case of Arnault vs. Nazareno (G.R. No. L-3920) referred to, the senator's argument will not hold water.

The case was decided by the Supreme Court on the basis of the 1935 Philippine Constitution. In the said case, Mr. Arnault refused to divulge the name of the person to whom he turned over P440,000 in cash, invoking "the right of a citizen to privacy in his dealings with other people." He explained his refusal by saying: "I simply stand on my privilege to dispose of the money that has been paid to me as a result of a legal transaction without having to account for any use of it."

Under the 1935 Philippine Constitution, the ground relied upon by Arnault was not yet enshrined in the said Constitution.

In the case of Mr. Ignacio Arroyo, he has the right under the following articles in our present Constitution:

(a) "The privacy of communication and correspondence shall be inviolable except upon lawful order of the court xxx." [Sec. 2, Article IV of the 1973 Constitution]

(b) "The State recognizes the indispensable role of the private sector, encourage private enterprise xxx." [Section 20, Article II of the 1987 Constitution]

(c) "Private enterprises xxx, shall be encouraged to broaden the base of their ownership." [Section 1, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution]

(d) "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights (including and not limited to both civil and political rights)." [Section 11, Article II of the 1987 Constitution]

It is very clear the Senate cannot compel a "resource person" to divulge his personal business transactions and any information and communication related thereto unless there is a court order for him to do so, otherwise there will be a violation of his/her rights under the Constitution.

Although some of the provisions are not under the Bill of Rights, the Supreme Court ruled *en banc* in Oposa et al. vs. Hon. Fulgencio Factoran, et al. (GR No. 101083—July 30, 1993) that: "While the right to a balanced and healthful ecology is to be found under the Declaration of Principles and State Policies and not under the Bill of Rights, it does not follow that it is less important than any of the civil and political rights enumerated in the latter."

—NESCITO C. HILARIO, lawyer, 25 Topaz St., Rockville II, 1116 San Bartolome, Novaliches, Quezon City

Where's the discount privilege of senior citizens

I UNDERSTAND that senior citizen card holders are entitled to a 20 percent discount off their medicine purchases. It appears that the only drugstore complying with this service in our place, Region 5, is Mercury Drugstore. But when I buy certain medicines from the Mercury branches in Naga, Legazpi and Tabaco, they give so many reasons, *kesyo* the medicines are not available or out of stock, or the person in charge of purchase booklet is not available.

To make the story short, poor senior citizens usually end up purchasing medicines in other stores without enjoying their discount privilege.

—GLORIA GONZALES, M.H. del Pilar Street, Tayhi, Tabaco City 4511

Clarification on Kuratong Baleleng case vs Lacson

THIS refers to Isagani Cruz's column published in the INQUIRER issue of Sept. 14, 2003.

To begin with, the Kuratong Baleleng case is not even in the trial stage yet, which means that neither prosecution nor defense has, as yet, introduced any evidence in court. Although the prosecution claims it was a rub-out; the accused contend that it was a shoot-out. For his column, therefore, to refer to the case as "Kuratong Baleleng massacre" is to unduly prejudge the case, to the prejudice of the accused therein, including Sen. Panfilo Lacson, not to mention that it may be an improper comment on a *sub judice* case.

What is worse and most damaging is the unfounded statement in the column that Senator Lacson "was the alleged mastermind." Such a claim is totally baseless and, with all due respect, Justice Cruz has absolutely nothing to support it. Has he read the records?

He also said that the Kuratong Baleleng case "was conveniently mothballed during Estrada's tenure but was resurrected under the new administration." He is again making a totally unfounded and unfair insinuation. As the records of the case clearly show, it was dismissed by the trial court for lack of probable cause since the prosecution witnesses retracted their affidavits and affirmed that the victims we're killed in a shootout not in a rub-out.

It was only when Senator Lacson became a candidate for the Senate during the 2001 elections that the present administration revived the case, when General Mendoza produced a witness who executed an affidavit implicating Senator Lacson in this case. Incidentally, earlier in 1996, this same witness claimed in an affidavit that he was not part of the task force that was formed to go after the Kuratong Baleleng gang.

He also alleged that after the Supreme Court ruled that the case could be refiled and the former accused reindicted, all of them, except Senator Lacson, moved for reconsideration, which is likely to be denied." It is a matter of record that Senator Lacson moved for reconsideration which he even later supplemented, and such motion is pending resolution before the Supreme Court. Justice Cruz's gratuitous comment that such motion "is likely to be denied" is conjecture that is totally uncalled for and is most unfair to the Supreme Court to which he once belonged.

I must say that, as a highly respected jurist and professor of law, it is most unlikely that Justice Cruz would use your column to deliberately misrepresent the facts. It is, therefore, safe to assume that he was merely misled. Whoever provided the wrong information must apologize to him for the undeserved injury to his highly respectable reputation.

—FELIX D. CARAO JR., co-counsel for Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Saguisag Carao & Associates, 2/F LMC Bldg., 3741 Baurista St., Palanan, Makati City

Makati SWAT also has a bomb suit

THIS is with reference to a photo caption on the new bomb suit donated by the Quezon City local government to the city's SWAT Team published in the Metro section. (PDI, 9/15/03)

We would like to clarify the portion that says, "...The Quezon City SWAT Team is the only police team in the country to have this kind of bomb suit."

As early as the first week of November 2002, the city government of Makati donated a bomb suit worth P2.5 million to the Makati Police Department (MPD) to beef up the capability of its Special Weapons and Tactics/Explosives and Ordnance Disposal (SWAT/EOD) Team to safely defuse bombs and other explosives in the wake of renewed terrorist threats. The bomb suit at that time was the first of its kind in the country, thus making the Makati Police the first-ever local police department to have it.

In fact, the INQUIRER issue of Dec. 5, 2002 came out with a photo (by Erik Arazas) of the demonstration of the bomb suit's features and of the actual bomb disposal operations done by members of the Makati SWAT/EOD Team on Dec. 4, 2002 at the Makati City Hall Quadrangle.

—JOSELITO S.J. SALGADO, officer-in-charge, Information and Community Relations Deprtment, City of Makati

Law-abiding citizens need protection

MAY we call the attention of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo concerning the inconsistent and irresponsible policy of the Philippine National Police.

While the PNP is tolerant and lax going after loose firearms, they are very strict in issuing a Permit to Carry Firearms to responsible citizens.

Lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc. and even reserved officers (graduates of ROTC Advance Course) are given a hard time to secure the Permit To Carry Firearms Outside Residence (PTGFOR).

We sometimes wonder why natural-born citizens are less favored than naturalized citizens, who usually can get the permit more easily. Is it be because they could easily fork over a good sum of money?

We are not against the "gunless society" of Nandy Pacheco. It's simply that citizens, media people, policemen, soldiers and ordinary helpless civilians, are being gunned down in broad daylight. A perfect example is the recent ambush of the MIAA assistant general manager Lilia Diaz.

Daily major newspapers always carry stories of lawless elements who can carry firearms of all sorts with impunity, victimizing law abiding citizens who are themselves deprived of full protection since they are not allowed to carry firearms without the necessary permit.

Just recently, the PNP wanted to arm barangay chairmen who are politicians, too. Why not us professionals who are responsible and disciplined citizens.

—ROMEO MENDOZA, Las Piñas City

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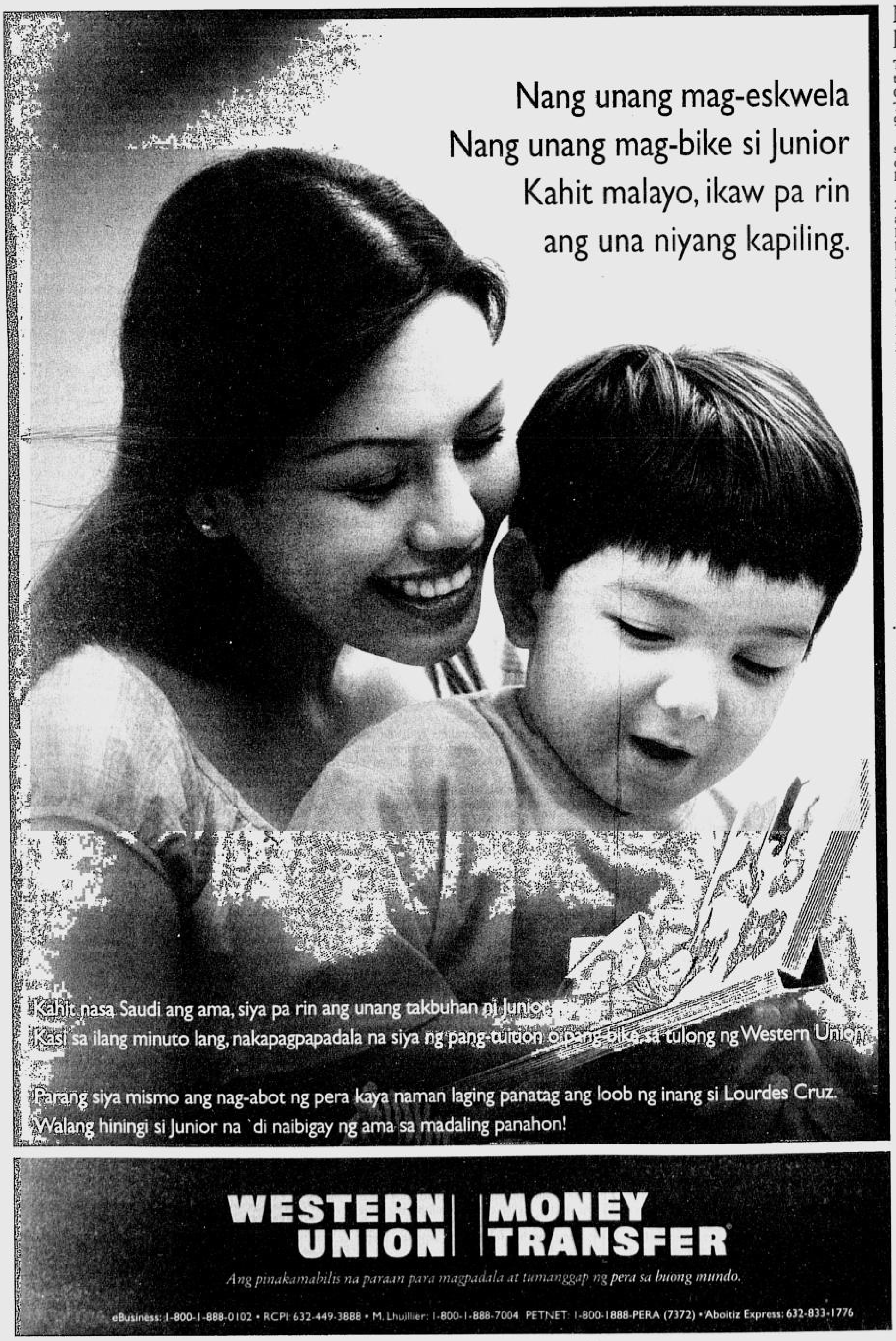
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ang una niyang kapiling.

Kahit nasa Saudi ang ama, siya pa rin ang unang takbuhan ni Junior.
Kasi sa ilang minuto lang, nakapagpapadala na siya ng pang-tuition o pang-bike sa tulong ng Western Union.

Parang siya mismo ang nag-abot ng pera kaya naman laging panatag ang loob ng inang si Lourdes Cruz.
Walang hiningi si Junior na `di naibigay ng ama sa madaling panahon!

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9 dead as flash floods hit Negros Oriental town; houses destroyed

DUMAGUETE CITY—Nine persons were killed, five of them children, while one person remained missing in Sta. Catalina, Negros Oriental after their homes were swept away by flash floods spawned by an inter-tropical convergence zone on Sunday night.

Reports from the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council said the fatalities lived along the riverbanks of the barangays of Milagrosa, Manalongon and San Francisco in Sta. Catalina, 90 km from here.

Confirmed dead were Perpetua Acapo, 75; her grandchildren Peter and Joan Jardiniano; Justina Elmido, 75; siblings Pedro Bacubac, 21, Juvy, 15, John Ray, 1, and Jo-An, 5 months old; and an unidentified female.

The fate of the parents of the Bacubac children remains unknown. The mother of Peter and Joan, Beverlita Jardiniano, 35, was listed as missing.

Oliver Lemence of the PDCC said the flash floods that occurred at around 9 p.m. were believed to have been caused by the merging of the swollen Milagrosa and Manalongon rivers following heavy rains spawned by an ITCZ.

Gov. George Arnaiz immediately sent Provincial Board Member Arturo Umbac, deputy chair of the PDCC, to Sta. Catalina to assess the situation and initiate relief efforts.

Umbac, interviewed upon his return from Sta. Catalina late Monday, said that the floodwaters rose by as high as 10 meters. He also reported that some houses were washed to the sea.

Umbac said they were informed about the disaster on Monday morning through a text message.

The calamity came barely five days after Arnaiz warned town mayors to evacuate residents of low-lying areas and those living along riverbanks.

The warning was made after Arnaiz received a memo from the National Disaster Coordinating Council, which assessed the damage wrought by typhoon Egay in July.

Then NDCC coordinator Angelo Reyes said local government units should ensure the safety of people by adopting a more proactive stance in managing disaster operations. *Alex Pal and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

"UNIQUE PENSION HOUSE"

EDWIN BACASMAS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

JOLO CHECKPOINT
Commuters riding in modified bicycles are not spared from a checkpoint in Jolo set up for a recent visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo there.

ABSENCES

Probe of ₱100M Pampanga scam stalled

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The investigation by the Pampanga provincial board of the alleged bidding irregularities in an estimated P100 million worth of projects since March 2002 under Gov. Manuel Lapid failed to take off following the absence of officials.

For the third time since Aug. 25, provincial engineer Jay Macatuno and provincial accountant Benjamin Yuzon were absent in Monday's *en banc* hearing by the board.

Of 11 board members, only Robert David and Joseller Guiao, public works committee chair, were present.

LAPID

Hearing

In the hearing that was supposed to start at 2 p.m., more than 20 contractors who have requested for the investigation waited until past 4 p.m.

After a 15-minute closed-door meeting with the complainants, Guiao announced his resignation as chair of the public works committee.

He told the INQUIRER he quit the post because he was dismayed over the "non-cooperation" of provincial officials.

"The vice governor (Juan Miguel Arroyo) had clearly instructed these officials (since the Aug. 25 hearing) to provide the board the needed documents. These officials ignored us. I feel useless here," Guiao said.

Transcripts

Transcripts of the Aug. 25 and Sept. 8 hearings showed that Luis Rivera, provincial board secretary, sent out invitations for the three officials to attend the hearings and to furnish documents on all negotiated contracts entered into by Lapid.

"They snubbed the investigation and their consistent disregard, if not obstruction, ought to be explained," David said.

Rivera said the three officials have not submitted letters explaining their absences or how they regarded the investigation.

Documents

Dave Guiao, spokesperson of the contractors, lamented the refusal of officials to furnish them documents.

"Those are public documents on how public funds were used," he said.

In their latest letter to Lapid and Yuzon, chair of the committee on awards for bidding at the General Service Office (GSO), the contractors asked why the provincial government went into negotiated contracts for "emergency projects" when disasters had spared Pampanga.

As the investigation broke down, the contractors said they would resort to legal action. In their letter, they told Lapid they would "adopt measures necessary legal or otherwise to protect our rights and interests if the bidding process . . ."

Lapid, interviewed by mobile phone on Tuesday, said the allegations of bidding irregularities were "not true since there were no projects yet in the first place." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Cebu boxing promoter deported

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The controversial American national who also served as boxing promoter in Cebu, Perry Martin McNeely, was finally deported yesterday noon via the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA).

Bureau of Immigration Regional Director Geronimo Rosas personally escorted McNeely from Mandaue City to the MCIA.

McNeely took Cathay Pacific flight CX920 for Hong Kong at about 12:30 p.m. en route to Bangkok and to Los Angeles.

The Bureau of Immigration first ordered the deportation of McNeely on June 18, 2002 but McNeely filed a motion for reconsideration.

However, on July 3, 2003, immigration chief Andrea Domingo and three other commissioners denied his motion for reconsideration.

The decision said even if McNeely has been acquitted in criminal proceedings in the US and in a Cebu City court, this does not prevent his deportation based on the same charge.

The decision also noted that the respondent has not presented proof of any working permit or evidence of an employment visa that would have allowed him to continuously promote local boxing in Cebu.

The decision also said that McNeely failed to establish that he is legally exempt from securing such a permit or visa from the Bureau of Immigration.

"This, in the absence of such a permit, visa, or exemption, the respondent effectively maintains an unlawful presence in the Philippines as an improperly documented alien;" the decision said.

McNeely has been known here in Cebu as a professional boxing promoter under the company JMP Boxing Stable and as operator of JMP taxi units.

Rosas said that the NBI has already coordinated with Hong Kong authorities about the deportee. McNeely will be turned over to pursers of different airlines. He will not have any escort from the MCIA all the way to the US.

COA recommends graft case vs Sarangani execs

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Commission on Audit (COA) has recommended the filing of criminal and administrative charges against Sarangani Gov. Miguel Escobar and 11 others officials for anomalous releases of P16 million in government funds to at least 53 fake cooperatives and non-government organizations.

The COA recommendation came more than a week after two investigating committees created by the governor allegedly tried to whitewash the case.

Investigators recommended the filing of charges against two department heads and 10 employees.

Aside from Escobar, other provincial officials held liable for the illegal disbursements were Vice Gov. Felipe Constantino, provincial administrator Perla Maglinte, provincial treasurer Cesar Cagang, budget officer Orlando Tan, provincial auditor Maria Camanay, assistant provincial agriculturist Patricio Sol, Romeo Miole, Suzette Clerigo, Roselyn Constantino, Leah Duhaylungsod and Jonathan Duhaylungsod.

The COA said in its 18-page report that financial assistance given to non-government and people's organizations were "fraudulently and illegally made resulting in the loss of P16,106,613 on the part of the government."

Of the total amount released, P8.85 million were approved by Escobar and Constantino.

COA said documents of disbursement vouchers were mostly falsified, while most of the cooperatives and NGOs were non-existent and inactive.

The report further revealed that the signatures in the disbursement vouchers and checks were forged. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Marijuana planting not as lucrative

By Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Since the 1970s, the average marijuana farmer of Kapangan town in Benguet has been earning up to P100,000 each time he or she produces no more than 10 kilograms for drug suppliers, a former marijuana farmer said here on Tuesday.

In a period where the dollar exchange rate was P2:$1, the farmer's seasonal revenue is reasonably substantial, said a 49-year-old farmer who claimed to have engaged in marijuana cultivation between 1976 and 1977.

But after more than 30 years of producing this illegal weed, neither Kapangan nor its farmers have benefited economically from marijuana, the farmer said.

He continues to work his small garden there to feed his four children.

Kapangan Mayor Rogelio Leon on Tuesday said the farmer's predicament confirms the findings of a recent study, which indicates that farmers in the town still treat this lucrative trade as a backyard industry that earns each farmer P100 for every kilogram harvested.

Kapangan is one of several Benguet towns classified by the government as major sources of marijuana. The country is reputed to be the top exporter of quality marijuana, according to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

But there are no Kapangan millionaires, Leon said, and the town earns a pittance from income taxes because no farmer can boast of making his farms pay.

The fifth-class town has a population of 18,137, who raised for the town only P17.7 million in taxes and business earnings in 2002.

The farmer said nothing has changed in the town's marijuana transactions since the 1970s.

Financiers, bearing quality marijuana seedlings, still approach Kapangan farmers to plant and monitor marijuana on forested hillsides in the town's outskirts, the farmer said. A farmer earns a P100 buy-back fee for every kilo he or she produces.

The farmer hires Kankanaey schoolchildren for P50 in a day's work clearing out the potential marijuana farms between May and June, to guarantee a harvest during summer. Leon said women get P100 for the same chore, while older men are paid P150.

In the intervening six months needed for the marijuana fields to flourish, the farmer revealed that the marijuana farmer joins his community in building up individual vegetable gardens for their own consumption.

"Some of the string beans, Chinese pechay, sweet potatoes and taro (*gabi*) are sold in the market, but we are three hours away from the main road, and we can't sell fresh vegetables," he said.

But between April 2002 and August 2003, the police confiscated and destroyed P51.67 million worth of marijuana plants, which were recovered from 21 sites near the Kapangan boundary.

Leon said these "unfair deals" convinced the government to treat suspected marijuana farmers in Benguet as "mere victims" of Metro Manila-based financiers, who earn more from marijuana retail.

Insp. Rizalino Dalope, Kapangan chief of police, said the street value of marijuana comes to P25 per gram, or a P250,000 retail price for a farmer's 10-kg haul.

"For every 12 households, I can say there is only one who is involved in marijuana raising. I was still in high school (during the 1970s) and marijuana was everywhere then. But government regulations had helped reduce the number of marijuana farmers. I have been approached by only three farmers, who admitted to have planted marijuana," Dalope said.

"If marijuana is (economically) good for the people, then we would have built roads," Leon said.

Discovering that the children are now used as laborers to clear marijuana fields convinced Leon to declare the industry as a proponent of "the worst kind of child exploitation."

Bulacan traders seek stop to flyover project

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A group of businessmen in Bulacan asked a court to stop Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez from resuming a P71.3-million flyover project at the Candaba (Pampanga)-Baliuag segment of the Maharlika Highway.

The civil case, filed at the regional trial court in Malolos on Sept. 18, also named Public Works Assistant Secretary Rafael Yabut, the agency's Central Luzon director Josefino Rigor, the contractor C.M. Pancho Construction Corp. and several unidentified men as respondents.

In the 10-page petition, the businessmen through their representative Crisostomo Wan also urged the court to declare the project illegal and, on three causes of action, issue it a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction.

Wan said former Public Works Secretary Gregorio Vigilar had terminated the project, suspended Public Works Regional Director Federico Gaspar agreed to implement instead the road-widening project proposed by the Baliuag municipal council.

While past bids were falsified in three major newspapers, the current bids that Soriquez had ordered published violated the provisions of Section 14 of Executive Order No. 40, Wan said.

These require the DPWH to announce the approved budget and the time and place of the opening of the bids.

He said copies of the invitation, published on Jan. 29 and Feb. 15 and 13 this year, did not mention these requirements.

The revised project along the Maharlika Highway does not have an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC), Wan claimed. The DPWH obtained an ECC only for the original design linking the Candaba and Baliuag road.

According to him, the municipal council also has not yet issued a resolution favoring or disapproving the revised project. It was conceived during the Estrada administration.

Wan also furnished the court a published statement of President Macapagal-Arroyo on Aug. 23: "I can order that the funds be transferred to other areas if there are people who do not want this project here." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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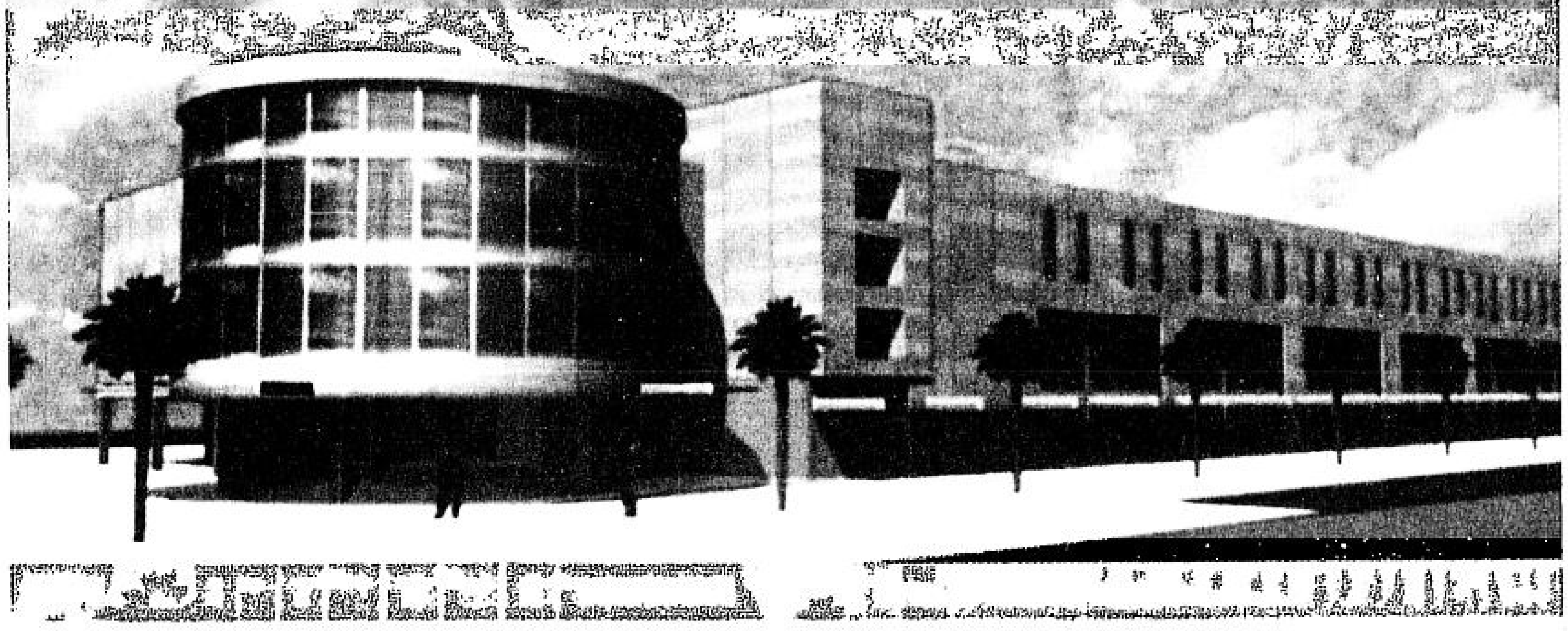

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Abandoned island eyed as tourist haven

By Allan Macatuno
Subic, Zambales

AN ABANDONED island, which played a significant role in the defense of the Philippines for almost four centuries, is being transformed into a self-contained recreational center off the shores of Subic.

Located at the mouth of Subic Bay, Grande Island is now being developed as a tourism estate to provide family entertainment experience for both domestic and foreign visitors.

During the Vietnam War in the 1970s, the 38.85-hectare island became a haven for more than 43,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees.

Now, the development of Grande will feature various tourism structures, amenities and related components, such as beach facilities, freshwater and seawater pools, water sports, fun rides and games, cottages or chalets, and other accommodations.

It will include a hotel and campsites, food and beverage facilities, convenience shops and the preservation of historical sites and forested areas, plus the improvement of piers for tourist ferry services.

Only 14.2 hectares of the island can be used for buildings and other facilities. The remaining areas are forests, historical sites and utilities and navigational facilities used by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Francis Elum, project director, said Grande aims to combine the convenience and luxury of modern-day amenities with the charm of an island experience, focusing on day trippers and overnight guests as two major target markets.

Environment concern

Conscious of the historical sites, the forested areas and the marine ecology of the island, the project shows more concern for the environment by using solar water heating systems in the hotel, cottages or chalets, restaurants and other facilities, Elum said.

By doing so, the project discards the use of about 100 units of 6-kilowatt electric water heaters, which require over half a million watts in electricity, he said.

GFTG Holdings Corporation, the project proponent, has committed to a three-year investment in Grande after the contract signing in June last year.

As of June, GFTG had already invested close to P100 million in construction work and over P150 million for two boats—the air-conditioned tourist ferry service and VIP cruises, which will transport tourists to and from Subic mainland and Grande Island.

Elum said a major feature of the project would be a three to four-hectare seawater inland beach lagoon at the middle of the island.

"Seawater will be pumped in and out of the lagoon to ensure the freshness of the seawater in the lagoon for beachgoers and swimmers, especially children. White sand will fill the bottom of the lagoon as well as the beaches surrounding it," he said.

Beach huts made of native materials would surround the inland beach, he said. The deepest portions will be appropriately marked with warning floaters and depth signage.

"This will be a child-friendly seawater beach lagoon facility not only for the safety of the children but also for the comfort of worried parents," Elum said.

He said the first phase of the project would have 20 quadruplex chalets or cottages with a total of 80 rooms.

"These chalets will have the convenience and luxury of modern day materials and amenities with the charm of native materials and island experience. Each chalet will have *anahaw* roofing for better aesthetics," he said.

The main reception will be a cluster of three structures: main reception building, front office and convenience shop.

These, according to Elum, will be imposing structures that are visible from Subic Bay at the Grande Island Pier.

The old United States Navy's Grande Hotel will be rehabilitated and turned into a hotel with 14 guest rooms, function rooms and a roof deck for open-air activities. The function rooms can accommodate 20 to 50 guests and can be used for seminars and workshops.

"For bigger groups, the roof deck may be used. The hotel will also house some administrative offices of the island resort," said Elum.

The former US Navy coffee shop will be remodeled into a covered air-conditioned coffee shop with the main kitchen at the basement and a series of open-air terraces where restaurant guests can have their meals and coffee while having the best view of the inland beach lagoon. Adjacent to the Grande Hotel, the Terrace Café will service the food and beverage requirements of the hotel.

Between the lagoon and the beach will be several food huts, which will be used by food concessionaires, as well as by GFTG's own fastfood service.

There will also be day trippers' huts all around the inland beach lagoon. A separate structure will be built for shower and changing rooms for guests.

Beside the main reception cluster will be a juice bar to service the guests who will use the water sports facilities.

The island's front and side beaches will be cleaned up and rehabilitated. Beachgoers will be encouraged to use the inland beach lagoon rather than the front and side beaches.

Elum said the Grande Island development's first phase would be completed by the end of the year.

By 2004, the second phase—which consists of the construction of a swimming pool and freshwater pond for fishing, improvement of the back beach and construction of hillside chalets and camping sites—will be completed.

SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo said the SBMA is giving all the help that the government needs to boost the tourism industry in the country.

Natural attractions

Payumo said they are adding more natural attractions, such as nature parks and gardens to enhance the freeport's environment.

He cited other tourist attractions that would "give family members visiting SBMA something more to enjoy here and make their stay longer." Among these are the Zoobic Safari, Butterfly Garden and Ocean Adventure.

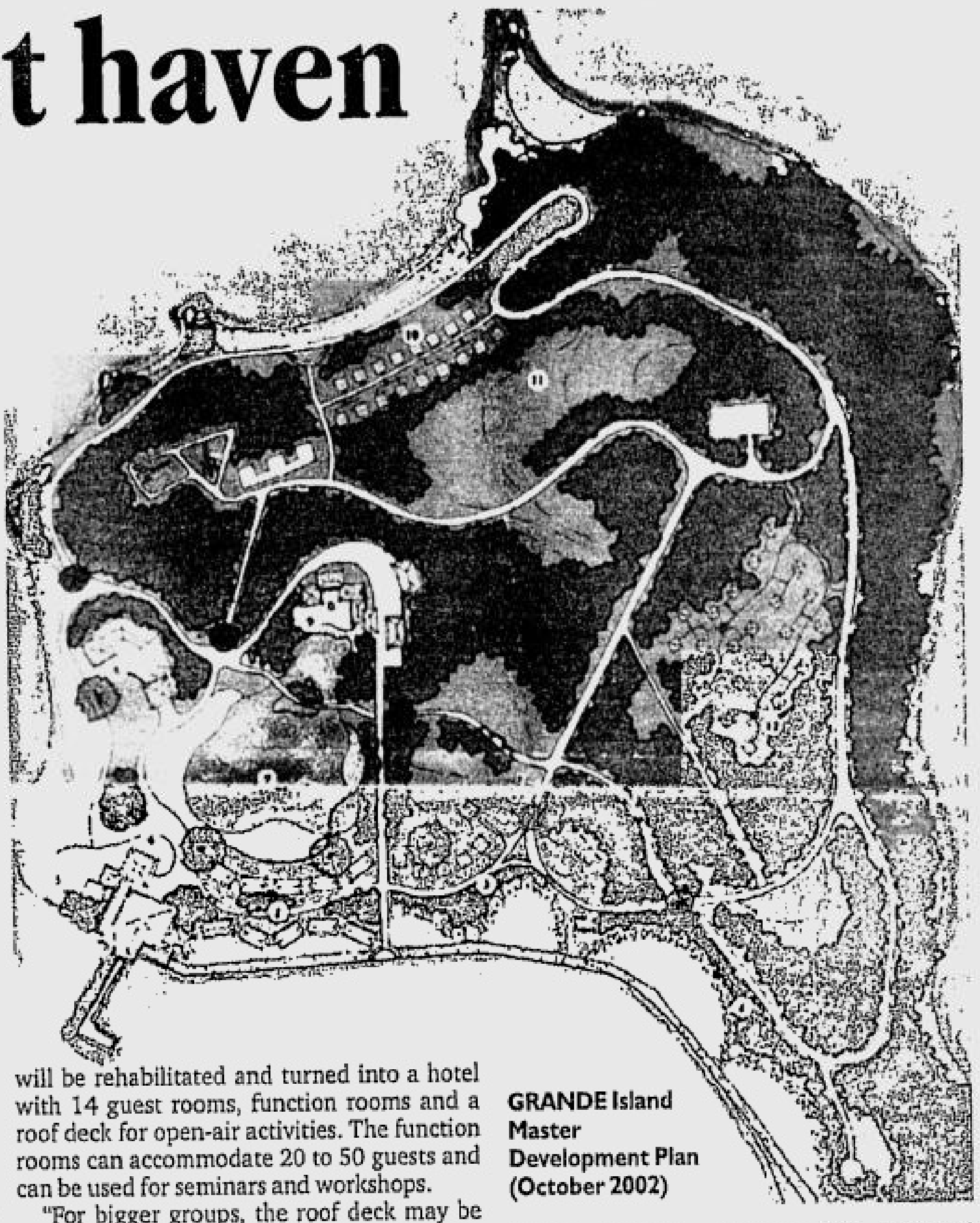
Macario de Leon, an architect and head of the SBMA's planning department, said the SBMA was fast becoming to be one of the top tourist sites in the country where local and foreign tourists are given new attractions and good accommodations.

"All the ingredients that visitors are looking for in a tourist destination are all here. The SBMA has ecotourism, sports tourism, technology tourism, cultural and historical tourism," De Leon said.

He said balancing progress and environment has always been a challenge on their part but SBMA officials can still manage to harmonize both.

Payumo acknowledged the potential of another tourist-related project, the Moon Bay Marina, in propelling the tourism industry of the SBMA. He said this would create more jobs and generate additional income for the government.

The Moon Bay project includes the construction of a baywalk, a water park, an apartelle-type hotel and a clubhouse.



GRANDE Island Master Development Plan (October 2002)

AN OLD arch gateway welcomes visitors to Grande Island. PHOTO COURTESY OF SBMA

'Tulungan': Community members working together

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Urdaneta City

A SMALL vegetable plot in the backyard might be insignificant to a city's economy, but a closer look would reveal that it could bring savings to the family and foster closeness and cooperation among community members.

This is what "Tulungan sa Purok (Helping out in the Community)" did to 22,000 households in 34 villages in the city which participate in the year-round program of the city government.

The program was adjudged second in the Best Practices Award given by the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) and the Ateneo School of Government during the LCP's 42nd general assembly held recently at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Pasay City.

The Tulungan sa Purok was conceptualized by Mayor Amadeo Perez Jr. in 1980 but was officially started in 1988 as an inter-barangay cleanliness and beautification contest.

More than a decade later, the program has become a part of life, even a way of life, of Urdaneta residents and community leaders.

Perez noted that the residents no longer need prodding to engage in food production or support the other activities of the program because "through the years, the program is already embedded in the consciousness of the city residents."

And this is perhaps because Tulungan is not a one or two-month activity, but is conducted the whole year. An evaluation team goes around the villages every three months, aside from periodic assessments and the final evaluation. The awarding is held every December.

"So the people are aware that they have to do their part everyday of the year," Perez said.

The program is an effort to reduce poverty and empower the people to build self-reliant, self-sufficient and sustainable communities. It is based on the core values of active citizenship and partnership.

Perez said that if a family saves just P10 a day by not buying vegetables available in the family's backyard garden, that family saves P300 a month.

"If all the households save P10 and there are 10,000 households with backyard gardens, those are savings of P100,000 a day or P3 million a month," he said. "And that's aside from having fresh vegetables for the family."

Perez said P10 a day is a very conservative estimate considering prices of vegetables usually go up during the rainy season, he said.

The vegetables, which the families cannot consume, are swapped with other kinds of vegetables planted by their neighbors.

The residents are looking forward to the day when they themselves can supply some of the vegetables sold at the city's *bagsakan* (wholesale) vegetable market where products from different provinces are brought and sold.

But the Tulungan sa Purok is not only about food production. It also involves livelihood program, cleanliness and beautification, health and sanitation, peace and order and records management for local officials.

Neither is the program only about families working together, but about community people working together.

The program has no official entry form (every village is qualified) and its prizes are in the form of community projects.

The "contest" only serves to induce community cohesion and competitiveness to bring about social change and economic growth, Perez said.

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Kris-Joey split started with a text message

From page A1

Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino IV to blotter the "incident."

According to her brother, Kris arrived at their mother's house in Times St. in Quezon City at 10 Monday night "visibly distressed" and "shaking all over."

Aquino said his mother was "shocked" and "distressed" about what happened to her daughter.

The Aquinos had been vocal about their disapproval of the Kris-Joey romance since it started early last year.

Closed doors

Behind closed doors, Kris and Fortun met with Pacer Chief Supt. Allan Purisima and PNP chief Director General Hermogenes Ebdane.

Fortun said that Kris only gave preliminary statements on the incident. In police parlance, this translates to having the incident "blottered." No formal charges had been filed at press time.

Charges to be filed are being evaluated by the police and Kris' lawyers who include Rene Saguisag who was the presidential spokesperson during former President Aquino's tenure.

Saguisag said Kris may have injured physical violence and emotional terrorism.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, who had been asked by the former President, to help her daughter, was also present.

Big buzz

The split that stirred a big buzz in the newsrooms around the country started with a text message, according to Marquez.

On Monday night while the couple was at the condominium unit of Marquez's sister Via Hoffmann at Essensa in Fort Bonifacio, Marquez got a text message from a woman who ask him why he would not issue her a business permit.

The full text of the message, according to Marquez read: "*Bakit mo ako ginanyan? Bakit mo hindi inissue ang permit?* (Why did you do this to me? Why did you not issue me a permit?)"

Marquez said that Kris, his live-in lover for more than a year, was standing beside him when he read the message. He claimed that Kris got jealous.

IT'S like a scene from a telenovela but the normally bubbly Kris Aquino shown here looking quite forlorn is once again at the center of prime time real life drama that riveted the attention of tens of thousands to their TV sets Tuesday night. Kris has just emerged from the Pacer headquarters in Camp Crame where she filed a complaint against her live-in partner Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

"She flared up," Marquez told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday.

He said that after Kris read the text message, "she started cursing me, calling me things."

Tell the truth

He said he wanted to go out of the room to be with other people so that Kris would calm down.

"But she would not let me leave the room," Marquez said. "She said she would go home to her mom and tell her things about me..." The last thing I told her before she left me was, 'Please don't invent stories. Just tell the truth.'"

Marquez later told GMA 7's "Frontpage" newscast that Kris told him, "I will destroy you. People will believe me more because I'm more popular than you."

Marquez denied he beat up Kris and poked a gun at her, but admitted to owning a "licensed" gun but he said that it was not with him at the time of the verbal tussle.

But Fortun said that at about 9:45 Monday night, Marquez cocked a 9mm pistol and pointed it at Kris. At 4 a.m., Fortun added, Kris proceeded to the Makati Medical Center to have the bruises she allegedly sustained on her arms and neck examined and treated. Fortun said that given her emotional state at that time of her confrontation with Marquez, Kris can't remember exactly how she got the bruises.

At around 1:15 p.m. yesterday, Fortun said Kris called him up crying and asking for his help.

Jealous rage

In a radio interview, Marquez claimed that during Kris' jealous rage, "I kept quiet so as not to blow up the situation. She was the one doing all the talking. There was nothing physical."

He added that he "would never hurt a woman."

'Very violent'

But Marquez said Kris was "very violent" during their fight.

She threatened to "hurt myself and make people believe that you're a bad person," Marquez quoted Kris saying.

"She scratched me a bit. I wanted to get out (of the room), but she wouldn't let me. So I just listened to her."

Marquez said he had not wanted to comment about their fight, saying "*baka sabihin bakla ako* (people might think I'm gay)." He said he's talking now after things had gotten out of hand.

"What's the medico legal for?" he asked, referring to Kris' trip to the hospital.

Fortun dismissed Marquez's allegations that he could not have hurt Kris saying that the "medical records will attest that is not true. Definitely, it is not true that Kris would inflict injuries on herself."

Fortun said, "Definitely Kris couldn't inflict injury to herself. To be accused of doing such a thing to herself is an insult to a Kris Aquino."

Stature

"I have no record of hurting anyone, much more of a woman of Kris' stature. She is a daughter of a former president of the republic of the Philippines and a national hero," said Marquez, who is also one of the hosts of the show biz talk show "S Files" on GMA 7.

Since March 2002, the couple had been having an on-and-off affair. The relationship reportedly caused the break-up of Joey's live-in partnership with actress Alma Moreno.

Recently, it was rumored that Kris had given Joey a Porsche sports car, a rumor which she had denied.

Marquez said he was saddened that people have started speculating and "dipping their fingers in this issue to be in the limelight."

But he has no regrets about having been with Kris all this time.

He also denied that there was a third party involved, saying "Kris wouldn't do that."

He said he did not know if they would be getting back together.

"I don't know if we're still on," he said.

But Marquez's manager Douglas Quijano had confirmed that Kris and Joey broke up the other night.

But Marquez said he still wants to hear from Kris.

"So far, everything is speculation. I have not heard directly from her. Let's just wait for her."

Woman named Mariz

According to a person close to the couple, a woman named Mariz, who is not from show biz, reportedly sent the text message.

Asked in the TV interview if he is ready to face Aquino, Marquez said that he is one with her in finding the truth. To Aquino, he has this to say: "*Sana sabihin lang kung ano talaga ang nangyari.*" (I wish she would say what really happened.)

Carnival

The Pacer compound, one of the most tightly guarded areas in Camp Crame, turned into a virtual carnival as employees, residents and the members of the media elbowed each other to get a glimpse of any showbiz celebrity.

Kris arrived in her white Dodge RoadTrack with Plate No. KKK-888. She had missed her morning show "Morning Girls" on ABS-CBN yesterday morning after calling in sick.

According to a source from the production staff of "Game K N B?" Kris had been moody and irritable during the taping of the game show last night. Which forced the staff to cancel the taping.

Leaks prompt SC to order new bar exams

VITUG

From page A1

ing morning when one of his staff secured a copy of the leaked questions from an examinee.

20 leaked questions

Vitug said he personally saw copies of the leaked 20 test questions. He said they were among the 50 questions which the examiner for that particular subject had formulated and submitted to him.

Vitug, as chair of the examinations committee, selected 70 to 75 percent of the draft questions and formulated the rest himself.

"I made new questions and nobody knew about them until the day of the exam," Vitug said.

Who is the examiner?

Yesterday morning, text messages spread naming the examiner as either former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez or presidential assistant for special concerns Norberto Gonzales.

But Vitug would not confirm that either was the examiner as identities of examiners are confidential.

Vitug said examiners are chosen based on their experience, integrity and reputation.

"Based on initial findings, the examiner had nothing to do with it," Vitug said. "There had been some text messages but these are not true."

Vitug said the examiner was very apologetic that the questions he had prepared had leaked.

"There must have been an unauthorized access to his computer," Vitug said.

Vitug said that just like him, the examiner had admitted being "computer illiterate" and did not realize that "modern technology has its consequences."

But Vitug said his statements should not be taken to mean that he was clearing the examiner of any liability. He said the SC will conduct an investigation on the matter.

Vitug said the examiner for mercantile law will not prepare the questions for the new examination on Oct. 4 as he had already inhibited himself.

"He's that kind of a gentleman ... or woman," Vitug said.

Open secret

A law professor of a Manila law school said cheating had been an open secret in the bar examinations, but the recent incident was the first time since 1979 that there was evidence of a leakage.

In 1979, questions in Taxation and Labor Laws were leaked, prompting the SC to annul the tests in those subjects.

A total of 5,455 law graduates have been taking the 2003 bar examinations, which started last Sept. 7, at the De La Salle University in Manila. The tests were held every Sunday thereafter and were supposed to end this Sunday, Sept. 28.

Mariano Magsalin, dean of the Arellano University Law School, brought up the matter of the leakage in a letter to Vitug, saying the school's operation center based at the Century Park Hotel received a copy of the leak as early as 6 p.m. on Saturday.

Magsalin, who joined Vitug's press conference, said they just ignored the leak and kept it in their files thinking that it was just one of those "tips" that bar examinees receive before the examinations.

Magsalin said he gave the questions a second look on Monday upon hearing reports that there was a leakage last Sunday. He saw 13 of the 20 questions given in the mercantile law examination.

"I don't even remember who gave it to me," Magsalin said.

Who was the source?

Initial reports said the leak benefited mostly examinees from the Ateneo de Manila University, University of the Philippines and the Manuel L. Quezon University, but Vitug said this could not be confirmed yet.

A law school professor claimed the leak came from bar examinees from Batangas. He, however, stopped short of pointing to Perez, a bar reviewer for Ateneo and MLQU, and a native of Batangas.

Vitug said it was "not he (Perez), but I can't disclose the name."

Andres Bautista, dean of the Far Eastern University law school and president of the Law Deans Association of the Philippines, said their organization stands behind the SC investigation on the irregularity.

"Lawyers today are much maligned. We do not want to add to that," Bautista said. "We support the investigation and we must make sure that it doesn't happen again."

Other controversies

The leakage during the exams last Sunday and in 1979 was not the only controversy to hit the country's bar examinations.

In 1926, a niece of Supreme Court Justice Norberto Romualdez connived with an examinee to raise the latter's ratings in two compositions to pass the examinations. The niece and the accomplice were convicted and imprisoned and Romualdez resigned out of *delicadeza*.

In 1981, Justice Ameurfina Herrera resigned as chair of the bar examination committee after she found out that one justice had informed another justice that the latter's son failed the tests, prompting the father to ask for a re-correction of the flunker's answers in one subject. All members of the high tribunal subsequently tendered their resignations, but except for two, all were retained.

In 2000, Justice Fidel Purisima, chair of the 1999 bar exams committee, admitted that one of the examinees was his nephew and that he failed to disclose this earlier—and inhibit himself from deliberations on the tests—because he only found out about it much later.

Purisima admitted that he had allowed his daughter and son-in-law, the nephew-examinee's first cousins, to handle examination booklets and questions.

Gerald Lacuarta

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POLICEMEN guard the UnionBank branch in Parañaque, the latest bank victimized by robbers. ERIK ARAZAS

METROBRIEFS

2 held for extort

A POLICEMAN and a civilian were arrested yesterday for allegedly extorting money from a Filipino-Chinese in Binondo, Manila. Operatives of the Western Police District-Special Operations Group took into custody P01 Arnold Malay of the WPD Anti-Illegal Drugs Division (WPD-DAID), and Richard Santos, of Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila. Victim Huang Shu Quan, 28, of Binondo, reported to the police that three armed men aboard a pick-up truck had blocked his path as he was walking along Asuncion Street in Binondo around 8 p.m. the other night. The men allegedly introduced themselves as policemen, and forced him into their vehicle. They threatened to jail him for allegedly possessing illegal drugs unless he paid them P100,000. The victim called his wife on the phone to raise the amount the suspects demanded, which had been reduced to P46,000. He was then brought to the WPD-DAID office at the WPD Headquarters on UN Avenue where the payoff was supposed to be done. The suspects were unwary that the victim's wife had already reported the incident to police, and that the meeting was an entrapment operation. Santos was nabbed after receiving the money from the victim's wife. *Tarra Quismundo*

PDI agent robbed

SOME policemen at the Western Police District Headquarters missed their daily dose of the INQUIRER yesterday. This after the woman who delivers the paper to the different WPD divisions lost P13,000 to two unidentified male robbers yesterday morning. Lina Waminal, 41, a newspaper agent who lives at 1200 Quirino Extension, Paco, Manila, told the police that while she was walking along Quirino Avenue on her way to Taft Avenue, she saw two men who appeared to be fixing their red motorcycle parked on the street. P03 Joey de Ocampo of the Western Police District Theft and Robbery section said that when Waminal sensed danger, she picked up her pace, until the same men, now on board the motorcycle, blocked her path when she reached a dark portion of the avenue. They then took her bag containing the money. *Tarra Quismundo*

UnionBank branch in Parañaque robbed

By Luige del Puerto

TWO DAYS after a "saturation drive" against a so-called lair of suspected bank robbers at Palar Village in Taguig, three men stormed a UnionBank branch in Parañaque City yesterday and calmly walked away with around P500,000.

The heist was pulled shortly before lunchtime, according to Insp. Glenn Tigson, head of the city's criminal investigation unit.

Initial investigation revealed that the three men entered the bank on Quirino Avenue in Barangay Tambo together with legitimate clients.

Once inside, the three took out their handguns, poked them at the bank's lone guard, and locked him up inside the comfort room, Tigson said.

The three, who witnesses said looked young, then reached for the cash registers and took whatever money they could.

The police said the robbers did not even bother to try to open the bank's vault.

In four minutes, it was all over, Tigson said.

Initial reports said one of the suspects was identified through a photo gallery.

The police, however, refused to reveal his name pending further confirmation.

The suspect is said to have figured twice in bank robberies, the police said.

"We want to make sure we have the right guy, so we are still verifying," Tigson said.

To escape, two of the suspects took the MIA Road, while the other one took the Airport Road.

No one was hurt in the incident, the police said.

Last Sunday, heavily armed policemen and soldiers backed by a tank, raided Palar Village and rounded up more than a dozen men believed to be bank robbers.

Several firearms were also seized from the village.

Palar residents have condemned the raid, insisting that their place is no haven for criminals.

A few officials believe the series of bank robberies in Metro Manila is politically motivated.

Guardians faction disowns arrested 'members' in Taguig

THE GUARDIANS faction identified with controversial Sen. Gregorio Honasan yesterday denied allegations that the suspected bank robbers who were arrested in Taguig during a police raid over the weekend were active members of their group.

Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI) spokesperson Ernesto Macahiya told the INQUIRER that their official roster showed they do not have members by the name of Maj. (ret.) Belisario Belen and Roberto Barba.

Belen and Barba were among the 12 suspected members of a gang allegedly behind the recent bank robberies in Metro Manila arrested by around 600 police and military operatives during a raid of Palar Village in Taguig last Sunday morning.

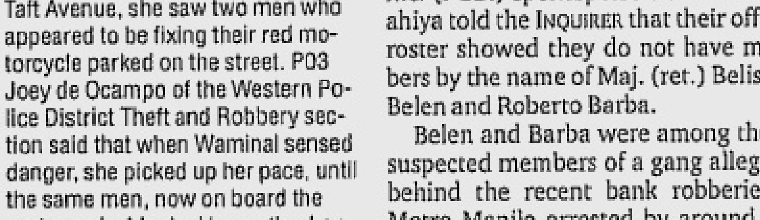
Police said the two were active members of PGBI chapter in the village.

But Macahiya denied the reports. He explained that they have no organized chapters in Palar Village.

He said officials of the Philippine National Police were trying to connect their group and some politicians to alleged destabilization plots against the government.

He branded the move as "one of PNP's dirty fishing expedition to vilify our group."

"If ever (they were Guardians members), they could be (from) other Guardian factions headed by fake Guardian leaders, but definitely not the PGBI led by Sen. Gregorio Honasan," Macahiya said. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



BOMB experts from the United States Secret Service talk to a member of the Western Police District bomb disposal unit during a visit Tuesday as part of security preparations for the coming visit of US President George W. Bush in October. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Fugitive back in jail

By Luige del Puerto

THE LAW finally caught up with a fugitive who had bolted the New Bilibid Prisons two years ago, the Mandaluyong Police reported.

Benjamin Padilla, 39, a former Army sergeant who was convicted for murder, was again showed his old cell inside the NBP facility yesterday.

Investigation revealed that Padilla was seen frequenting Barangay Ibaba in Mandaluyong for the past few weeks.

Acting on the tip, a team from the city police and the NBP staked out the area.

At around 9:30 p.m. on Monday, the operatives nabbed the surprised convict who was walking leisurely on Pantaleon Street.

The police said Padilla escaped on Sept. 3, 2001.

The court had sentenced Padilla to 11 years in prison for murder, the police added.

Prank callers, texters warned

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

PRANK callers and texters beware. A technologically enhanced Patrol 117 can now go after you.

The P50-million call center built for the Emergency Network Philippines Project—the upgraded version of the Patrol 117 hotline program—is now equipped with advanced computers which could track down all callers.

And if plans push through, the Department of Interior and Local Government would recommend to all local government officials that they pass ordinances in their respective areas which would penalize prank callers and texters.

DILG secretary Joey Lina said yesterday he would suggest fines and a 30-day imprisonment as penalties in the proposed ordinances.

Lina said that since the Patrol 117 was operationalized in May, around 98 percent of the calls the hotline has received turned out to be "illegitimate" or prank calls.

But with the new technology, all calls will now be recorded. These recordings can then be used as evidence in going after prank callers.

Lina said eliminating prank callers would make the system "more effective."

Patrol 117 is an emergency hotline similar to the popular 911 rescue hotline in the United States. Aside from the calling component, people could also text 117 to report non-emergency cases like drug hot spots or other community problems.

The advanced call center in Quezon City, housing both the Patrol 117 and the Text 117 systems, was presented to selected members of the media yesterday. At least 12 operators, each equipped with his own computer and set of communication devices, attend to calls made to Patrol 117.

The Quezon City call center is part of the planned nationwide integrated communication and relay network system, which is aimed to be completed by February 2005.

Similar advanced P50-million call centers will also be built in La Union, Cagayan, South Cotabato and Iloilo in the next couple of months.

The entire project, a DILG loan from Austria for 20 years, aims to establish at least one call center for every region in the country.

Lina said the enhanced Patrol 117 and Text 117 would "tremendously help in the fight against criminality."

Crackdown set on 'ghost cops'

NATIONAL Capital Regional Police Office (NCRPO) Chief Deputy Director General Reynaldo V. Velasco yesterday ordered the district directors and station commanders for a renewed drive to track down possible "ghost employees."

This developed as Velasco assured that the Metro Manila police is continuously implementing a continuing program to account its 17,000 police personnel.

Velasco made the assurance in a press statement following a report from the National Police Commission (Napolcom) that there are at least 1,095 unaccounted policemen and employees based at Camp Crame.

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane has directed Velasco and other officials to account for all police personnel and to countercheck all units and officers roster of personnel prior to every pay day.

"Along this line, I made my field commanders account for all the men and women under them and ensure that all perform their assigned duties and responsibilities. It pins down public accountability on the shoulders of upright police officers," Velasco said.

Velasco has ordered the accounting of personnel in every unit of command including imposing sanctions without exemptions, the procurement of bundy clock and its installation in the regional headquarters so as to prevent tardiness among employees.

Marcus needs help for liver transplant

MARCUS Alfred Vipinosa suffers from biliary atresia, a rare disease that is destroying his liver. He needs a liver transplant to live.

MARCUS

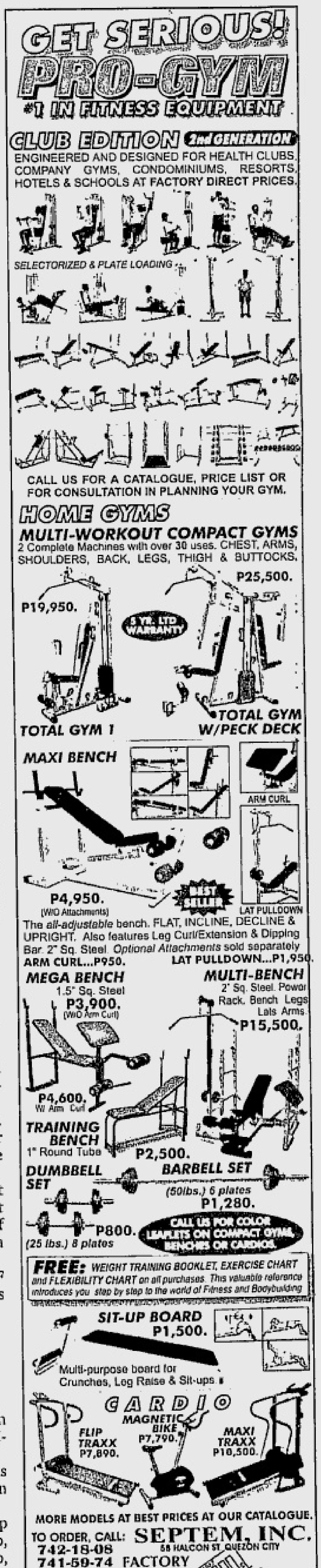
His parents, Alexis and Melanie, however, can't afford the P3 million needed for a liver transplant here or in Taiwan. They are appealing for financial help.

Donors can send their donation to the Vipinosas home at 4792 Solchuaga St., Barangay Singkamas, Makati City. They can also call 728-3090 or cell phones (0916) 471-0854 or (0917) 740-5509.

You may also contact LIFT- B.A.B.I.E.S. Foundation Inc. at Tel No. (632) 824-4621 or CP 0918-9263237, which is helping raise funds for Marcus.

Donors can also deposit their donations at either Metrobank or Banco de Oro. At Metrobank, the account is in the name of Alexis L. Vipinosa ITF Marcus Alfred Vipinosa and account number is 044-3-04468441-2.

At Banco De Oro, the account name is ITF Marcus Alfred M. Vipinosa and the number is 90123298.



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Makati folk prepare to take on cyberspace

By Margaux Ortiz

MOST Makati City residents cannot go to see the world, but now they can go anywhere in the world just by visiting their barangay centers.

Recently, the Makati City government opened its first barangay computer center (BCC) where residents could learn how to use a computer and even click a button to visit any part of the globe.

The BCC in Barangay Sta. Cruz aims to provide computer related education and access to the Internet for free.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay said in a statement that the project was part of the city government's continuing program to promote computer literacy among its residents.

Binay said that aside from Sta. Cruz, computer centers would be set up in 16 other barangays in the city.

These centers will have six to 10 computers which can be used for free by students and local folk, Binay said.

The mayor also said that the centers would provide training on basic computer skills and software programs like MS Windows, MS Word, Excel and Power Point.

Students and residents would also be trained on how to surf the worldwide web, use e-mail and other Internet services, the mayor added.

Kagawad Bayani Oligario, chairman of Barangay Sta. Cruz's educational and cultural affairs, said he was happy about the development.

He also said that out-of-school youth aged 15 and above would be given priority in computer education classes.

The centers will be open to students and residents from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays.

A computer center will also be set up in Barangays Pio del Pilar, San Antonio, Olympia, Singkamas, West Rembo, Comembo, Pembo, Guadalupe Nuevo, Poblacion, Pinakaisahan, Rizal, San Isidro, Post Proper North Side, South Cembo, Cembo and Guadalupe Viejo.

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Manila Water hikes rates

By Christine Gaylican

METRO Manila residents connected with the Manila Water Company Inc. (MWCI) will be paying an additional P5.23 per month starting Oct. 7.

The rate adjustment is due to the weakening of the peso against the dollar over the last three months, the Ayala-owned company said.

Based on the MWCI pricing structure, 70 percent of Manila Water customers who consume an average of 30 cubic meters per month will pay an additional P5.23 per month or 18 centavos per day. This will bring their monthly bill from P231 to P226.

Manila Water services the east zone concession area of Metro Manila which covers Mandaluyong City, Pasig City, Pateros, San Juan, Taguig City, and portions of Makati, Manila, Marikina, Quezon City and Rizal.

Water concessionaires in Manila are allowed to adjust their rates quarterly based on the strength or weakness of the peso against the dollar.

Using the foreign currency differential adjustment (FCDA) mechanism, Manila Water will try to recover losses it incurred with the upsurge of the exchange rate during the third quarter.

During the period, the dollar shot up to P54.99 and overshot the company's projection of P51.86 to the greenback.

The MWCI is affected by fluctuations in the exchange rate due to $90 million in dollar-denominated debt it inherited from the former Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

It remits the amount to the MWSS as concession fees.

The Ayala Group's water subsidiary pays not less than P1 billion in concession fees while paying its direct loans, which are dollar and yen-denominated.

In the first half of 2003, Manila Water showed strong performance as earnings grew to P620 million from P430 million earned the previous year.

It expects growth to continue for the rest of the year.

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RED ALERT
A member of the Central Police District SWAT inspects the bag of a bus passenger in Quezon City amid new reports of a destabilization plot. JOAN BONDOC

Top cop warns dirty lawmen and precincts

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

CLEAN up or pack up.

National Capital Regional Police Office Director Reynaldo Velasco yesterday warned lawmen that they could lose their badges for being sloppy.

Velasco paid a visit to at least four police community precincts in Quezon City yesterday to push the cleanup campaign of the Philippine National Police.

"We cannot expect the people to respect the police if we don't look good and our working areas are untidy," Velasco said in a statement.

He cited NCRPO's *Pulis Malinis, Pulis Magalang at Pulis Mabilis* program aimed at regaining the public's trust and respect in the police force.

Should police officials ignore the cleanup directive and maintain their dirty offices, they would be slapped with sanctions, if not dismissal, Velasco warned.

While the NCRPO director admitted that the police did not have the budget to finance big cleanup drives, he said police officials could turn to government officials and private groups for help.

He cited the Filipino-Chinese Business Club which has assisted the NCRPO in repainting several precincts and stations in Metro Manila.

He added that partnership with several non-government organizations had paved the way for the renovation of the NCRPO headquarters in Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig.

In his precinct-hopping yesterday, Velasco inspected the Police Assistance Center in Balintawak, the Camachile station also in Balintawak, the police office under the Tandang Sora flyover and inaugurated the renovated Police Community Precinct 5 of the Central Police District in Barangay Vasra.

BF launches bid to land in surveys

By Luige del Puerto

HIS PLAN to run for vice president is no longer a secret. But to get his plan off the ground he should first get his name included in surveys for 2004 hopefuls.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando said yesterday "winnability" was very important in getting the nomination of the administration Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

Bayani officially announced his intention to run in a breakfast forum at the Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

Former Secretary Raul Roco and Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao sat alongside the MMDA chair.

Tiglao and Roco, however, clarified they were there merely as members of the Tuesday Group of Veteran Journalists.

Fernando said the non-inclusion of his name in surveys on vice presidentiables limited his chances of getting the Lakas nod.

Despite this, he was confident that his experience as head of a construction firm, as a local executive for nine years, and now as MMDA chair, gave him an advantage over other likely Lakas vice presidential bets.

Fernando's strongest possible contender for the nomination is Sen. Loren Legarda.

Roco, a front runner in the presidential race, said Fernando was in his short list of possible running mates.

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Mighty China leaves crumbs to 3As rivals

By Roy Luarca

THERE was China and then the rest.

The Chinese sealed their runaway victory in the 15th Asian Athletics Championships with two more meet records and six gold medals yesterday, leaving the rest of the countries to fight for the crumbs at the close of competitions at the Rizal track and field stadium.

Striking hardest in the women's division, the Chinese captured 19 of the 43 golds staked, showing their big disparity in skills compared with the best athletes from the 41 other nations that competed in the four-day tourney.

Rookie Ha Mingming started China's final onslaught by topping the women's 20-km walk with a new mark of 1 hour, 31 minutes and 47 seconds while Huang Xiaoxiao followed suit by ruling the women's 400-meter hurdles in another meet record of 55.66.

The 21-year-old Ha, a sophomore at the Tianjin Track and Field College, eclipsed the 1:36.57 made by compatriot Kelian Gao in the Colombo edition last year. Huang erased the 55.80 mark of another Chinese, Li Rui, posted in the 1998 Fukuoka championships.

Qatari Adam Abdul Adam Ali accounted for the day's third record in clinching the 800m gold with a time of 1:46.20. Ali beat teammate Albadri Salam (1:46.95) in a sprint duel to the finish.

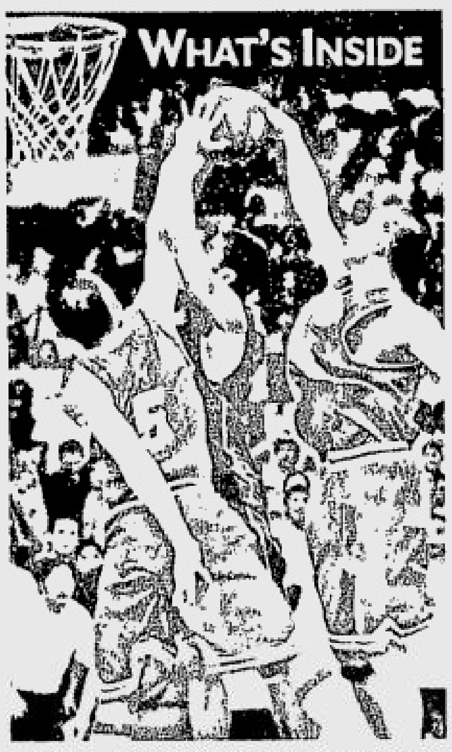
China's other golds came from Wang Zhouzhou in men's high jump (2.23m), Ma Nin in women's javelin (57.05m), the 4 x 100 men's relay (Shen Yunbao, He Jun, Yang Yaozu, Chen Haijian), and the 4 x 400m women's relay (Chen Lisha, Zhang Xiaoxiao, Huang XiaoXiao, Bui

MIGHTY/ A24

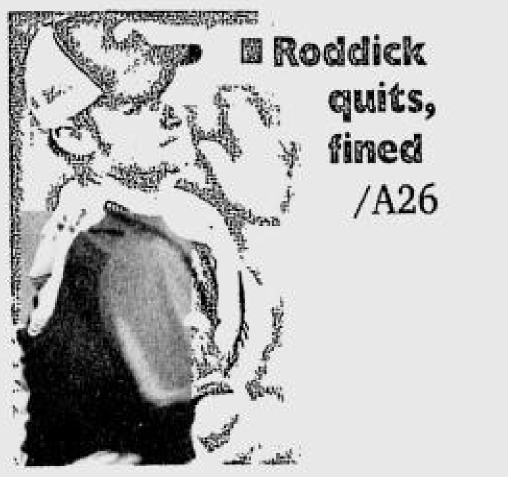
adidas
632
279
140
adidas
381

YINYIN Khine of Myanmar (right), easily Southeast Asia's best performer in the championships, tows Kazakhstan's Tatyana Roslanova (second from left) and Uzbekistan's Zamira Amirova to the finish in the 800m. ERNIE U. SARMENTO

WHAT'S INSIDE



- Stags-Knights rubber match up at Cuneta /A25



- Roddick quits, fined /A26

Adamson eyes 2 title berths; Ateneo-DLS up

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
11 a.m.—Ateneo vs La Salle-Zobel (Jrs)
2 p.m.—Ateneo vs Adamson (Women's)
4 p.m.—UP vs La Salle (Women's)
6 p.m.—UST vs Adamson (Jrs)

ADAMSON tries to reach the finals in two divisions today even as the junior teams of Ateneo and La Salle collide as appetizer to the titanic clash of their senior counterparts in the Final Four of the UAAP basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Lady Falcons seek the first title slot in the women's division against the Ateneo cagerettes at 2 p.m. while the Baby Falcons shoot for the second juniors championship berth against the Santo Tomas Baby Tigers at 6 p.m.

The Ateneo Eaglets, enjoying a twice-to-beat privilege like the two Adamson squads, clash with the La Salle-Zobel Bengals for the other juniors title slot at 11 p.m.

The Lady Archers are also the underdogs in their 4 p.m. date with the University of the Philippines' Lady Maroons, who finished No. 2 behind the Lady Falcons in the eliminations.

The defending champion Ateneo Eagles also own a twice-to-beat edge when they take on the La Salle Archers in the men's Final Four tomorrow.

It will be Far Eastern against University of the East in the other men's semifinal pairing, with the Tams needing just a win like the Eagles to advance to the title playoffs.

Vietnam SEAG-bound Minerva Narciza, Dorothy Torres and Marites Gadian make the Lady Falcons solid picks over the Lady Eagles, who gain strength from Erika Dy and Karla La Rosa.

UP pins its hopes on slotman Camille Dowling as it battles La Salle, powered by Regina Velarde.

Forward Ken Barracoso, Jose Reyes and Paolo Dizon banner the Eaglets' bid to oust the Bengals, who are bidding to force a decider with a victory today. The Bengals and the Eaglets split their elimination matches. *Dennis U. Eroa*

Splash on some freshness.

SMART zed Hitlist

1 Spaghetti Song	Sexbomb	TONE SPAG
2 Mr. Suave	Parokya Ni Edgar	TONE MRSUAVE
3 Can't Lose You	F4	TONE CANTLOSE
4 Broken Vow	Lara Fabian	TONE BROKEN
5 Where Is The Love	Black-Eyed Peas	TONE WERISLUV
6 Here We Are	F4	TONE HEREWE
7 Get Busy	Sean Paul	TONE GETBUSY
8 Crazy In Love	Beyonce Knowles	TONE CRAZYIN
9 Buffalo Soldier	Bob Marley	TONE BUFFALO
10 Panaginip	Jolina Magdangal	TONE PANAGINIP
11 Faint	Linkin Park	TONE FAINT
12 If You're Not The One	Daniel Bedingfield	TONE IFYOURNOT
13 Build Me Up, Buttercup	Sound Alike	TONE BUTTERCUP
14 I Know What You Want	Busta Rhymes And Mariah	TONE IKNOWAT
15 We Are The Champions	Queen	TONE CHAMPIONS
16 Keep On Singing My Song	Christina Aguilera	TONE KEEPON
17 Love Me For A Reason	Osmonds	TONE LOVEME
18 Senorita	Justin Timberlake	TONE SENOR
19 All I Have	Jennifer Lopez	TONE ALLIHAVE
20 My Friend	Vaness Wu	TONE MYFRND
Breathe	Blu Cantrell & Sean Paul	TONE BREATHE1
Give Me A Chance	Ric Segreto	TONE ACHANCE
How Can I	Martin Nievera	TONE HOWCANI
Kung Maibabalik Ko Lang	Regine Velasquez	TONE MAIBALIK
Tuloy Pa Rin Ako	Side A/Labuyo	TONE TULOYPA
Can't Hold Us Down	Christina Aguilera	TONE CANTHOLD
In Love	Lisa Maffia	TONE INLOVE
Can't Get It Back	Mis-teeq	TONE GETITBACK
Never Going Nowhere	Bluetones	TONE NEVERG
Crazy Beat	Blur	TONE CBEAT

LOGO MRSUAVE 1, LOGO LUVHEAR 2, LOGO LOVE 3, 4, 5, LOGO ANGELS 6, 7, 8, 9, LOGO WONDAIR 10, 11, LOGO ADDICT 12, LOGO FRENCH 13, 14, 15, LOGO 2FAST 16, LOGO LWAPUT 17, LOGO ANGELS 18, 19, LOGO INLUVWU 20
LOGO TAWA, LOGO NEED, LOGO ILYGRIN, LOGO BUBBLES1, LOGO FITEZ, LOGO LOVE, LOGO FLEBLOW, LOGO LIZARD, LOGO BABY, LOGO PLANE1, LOGO BERSINLUV, LOGO MISLKAT, LOGO PEST

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SMART Simply Amazing!

Hawkins, Coke Tigers face Gin Kings today

GAMES TODAY (*Makati Coliseum*)
5 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs FedEx
7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Ginebra

"BONG" Hawkins, in the freezer the last two years, springs back to action when the Coca-Cola Tigers meet the Barangay Ginebra Kings today in the PBA Reinforced Conference at the Makati Coliseum.

Hawkins, a key member of Alaska's grand slam team in 1996, will boost the frontline of the Tigers when they go for a fifth straight win against the crowd-favorite Kings at 7:30 p.m.

The Tigers have recently signed Hawkins to a four-conference contract worth at least P2.3 million after the 6-foot-4 power forward's long contract dispute with the FedEx Express was settled.

Another plus for the Tigers is the nagging calf injury of Eric Menk, who was sorely missed when the Kings lost to the Express in their last outing.

With the 6-foot-6 Menk a doubtful starter, coach Alan Caidic will have to tap rookie Romel Adducul, Alex Crisano and Banjo Calpito to fill the void in the shaded lane.

In the curtain-raiser, Sta. Lucia Realty hopes to solidify its hold of the lead in Group A when the Realtors tackle the FedEx Express at 5 p.m.

Sta. Lucia Realty sports a 3-1 record against the Express' 2-3 mark. *June Navarro*

Mighty China leaves crumbs to 3As rivals

From page A23

Fangfang). The men's relay team timed 39.22 while the women's squad clocked 3:31.30.

Exceeding their target of 11-13 golds, the Chinese finished with 19 golds, 10 silvers and 8 bronzes, way ahead of the Qataris' (6-3-2), the Uzbeks' (4-1-4), the Kuwaitis' (3-0-0) and the Kazakhs' (2-5-2). The Chinese also shattered four of five meet marks, including the women's triple jump by Huang Quiyan (14.39m) and the 20-km men's walk by Han Yucheng (21:11.3).

Uzbekistan's Vitaliy Smirnov earned the meet's Iron Man title by topping the decathlon.

Smirnov amassed 8,021 points, trouncing Kazakhstan's Pavel Dubitskiy (7,604) and countryman Pavel Andreev (7,487).

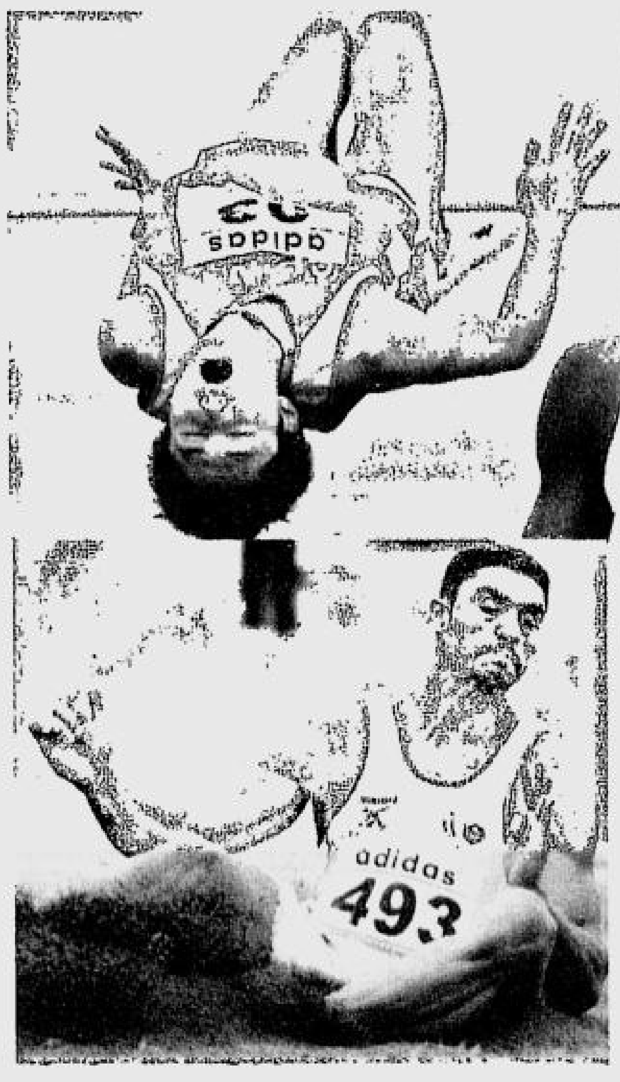
A big disappointment was Japan which produced only one gold though it landed 11 silvers.

Myanmar's Yin Yin Khine became the meet's second double gold medalist following her victory in the 800m.

Khine, who had earlier ruled the 400m, clocked 2:01.96 in besting Kazakhstan's Tatyana Roslanova (2:02.41) and Uzbekistan's Zamira Amirova (2:02.84) to match the two-gold haul of China's Yingjie Sun, the women's 5,000m and 10,000m titlist.

Filipino bets again faltered against superior opposition as typified by Melinda Manahan, who finished sixth and last in the women's 20-km walk, and the 4 x 100m men's relay team (Arnold Villarube, Alex Gabito, Jimar Aing, Henry Dagmil), which also ended last among the eight finalists. Manahan clocked 1:47:52.0 while the relay team timed 41.18.

The 4 x 100m women's relay team of Lerma Bulauitan-Gabito, Leslie Cercado, Jonan Genilza and Grace Melgar clocked 46.33 seconds and landed fifth, way behind SEA Games rival Thailand, which timed 44.25 in stunning Japan (44.56) and China (44.97). Indonesia, another SEAG powerhouse, finished fourth (45.95).



	G	S	B	Total
China	19	10	8	37
Qatar	6	3	2	11
Uzbekistan	4	1	4	9
Kuwait	3	0	0	3
K'zakhstan	2	5	2	9
Myanmar	2	0	0	2
Japan	1	11	9	21
S. Arabia	1	2	1	4
Thailand	1	1	3	5
Bahrain	1	1	1	3
Sri Lanka	1	1	1	3
Kyrgystan	1	0	0	1
Vietnam	1	0	0	1
India	0	3	4	7
Korea	0	3	1	4
C. Taipei	0	1	1	2
Iran	0	1	0	1
Philippines	0	0	2	2
Malaysia	0	0	2	2
Tajikistan	0	0	1	1
Indonesia	0	0	1	1

The 50-man Philippine contingent ended its campaign with two bronzes, courtesy of Gabito in the women's long jump and Eduardo Buenavista in the men's 10,000m. It was a slight dip from the country's lone silver (courtesy of Gabito in the same event) and a bronze (Marestella Torres also in long jump) during the Sri Lanka edition last year.

Fagged out by his effort in Monday's 10,000m, Buenavista opted to skip the 5,000m final.

"At least we did not end up empty handed," said Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok. "Competition here is really getting tough."

Go, however, maintained that some of his wards, particularly Gabito, Buenavista and Ernie Candelario in the men's 400m, are sure winners in the Vietnam SEAG in December.

After the awarding ceremonies, a farewell dinner for the more than 1,200 delegates was held at the adjacent baseball stadium.

QATAR'S Adam Abdul Adam Ali crosses the finish line to win the gold in the 800m; Kai Cui (top left) of China clears the bar but settles for the silver in the women's high jump. Hussain Al-Saba (above left) lands Saudi Arabia's only gold in the long jump. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

St. Francis five a victory from UCAA title

THE ST. FRANCIS Doves, starring Ranidel de Ocampo, blasted the Philippine School of Business Administration Jaguars, 95-60, in Game 1 Monday of the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA) men's basketball tournament at the Rizal Coliseum.

De Ocampo, who said that this could be his final year with the Doves, topscored with 17 points, including 10 in the last seven minutes of the second quarter that shattered a 31-all deadlock and sent the Doves to a 41-31 halftime edge.

De Ocampo, Ervin Sotto and Lyndon Abian then lifted the Doves to an 18-point lead at 54-36 with 7:35 left. Rookie Christopher Concepcion unloaded 13 while Nizar Kiram banged in 12 for the Doves, who moved a win away from retaining the crown.

"This is the finals and the boys are really excited at the prospect of defending their title," said Doves coach Gabby Velasco, whose wards can wrap it all up next Monday.

Bowling and the problem of winning

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THIS, indeed, is very petty. But only if you've yanked both values and fairness out of the regular sports menu.

OK, you have probably heard about the record-breaking triumph of the RP women's team that captured the trios event gold medal in the 15th World Bowling Championship in Kuala Lumpur last week.

That feat, no matter how you regard world titles, was pure Page One stuff.

It's a remarkable achievement that all self-respecting Filipinos would love to share with the whole world.

Now, let's see, how did that near-magical triumph start to become a problem in itself?

Also: How come the INQUIRER failed to carry even a line of the exhilarating news in its sports section the morning after?

***

The Star had it.

The Bulletin flashed the big story as banner in its main sports page.

In fact, the Bulletin story even carried the byline of a certain Dr. Danny Santos.

The Today newspaper also managed to run the victory stuff as mainer on the right hand side of its sports section spread.

Oh, you need not ask how the INQUIRER sports editor felt upon waking up to the horror of being scooped on a historic world title won by a Philippine team.

The entire INQUIRER sports staff, to put it mildly, felt betrayed.

Why? Because if Dr. Danny Santos, subsequently identified as the secretary-general of the Philippine Bowling Congress, could go out of his way to send a detailed, bylined story to the newspaper of his choice, why did he not bother to inform most other dailies of the great feat?

Maybe he likes the INQUIRER to look silly?

Maybe he likes the paper of his choice to look and sound singularly triumphant?

***

Look, this was one instance when winning had suddenly become a problem.

Because, why keep the great news of the big victory from others when, as sec-gen of the triumphant sports agency, it was his role to share it with the most number of countrymen he could reach.

Look, when Steve Hontiveros, head of the PBC, surprisingly made it as president of the FIQ (Federation Internationale de Quillers), the ruling body of world bowling, the INQUIRER, just like other papers, celebrated it with a story in its sports section.

Hontiveros was gracious and gentleman enough to call up our sports desk to extend his gratitude before leaving for the United States to formally assume his prestigious post.

This is being noted here to state that, if Hontiveros had been in KL during the world title triumph of the RP team, all the newspapers would have been properly informed of the feat.

Why? Simple. Because that's the sane and fair thing to do.

***

Did the sec-gen of the PBC decide to discriminate?

This question is being asked because there must be a reason for him to have kept the great world championship achievement from other readers.

It's hard to fathom. Maybe the guy had ran short of funds to send the happy message to others?

He could've called collect and others would have been more than willing to scavenge from the Internet if only they had had an inkling of the great triumph.

Now, you must be wondering why you reporter here has been yakking out loud over the snub done by the Philippine Bowling Congress.

The answer is simple. First, it doesn't feel good for a major daily to be left out of a big news of world significance.

Secondly, the INQUIRER feels duty bound to share this rare triumph to the greatest number of readers.

A triumph is a triumph.

It could not be otherwise. The more Filipinos knew about it, the better.

The more young sports fans learn about it, the better for the sport of bowling.

***

Anyway, we are saying this with the sincere hope for tenpin bowling going the way of billiards. You know, how pool became a rage following the world title triumph of Efren "Bata" Reyes in Cardiff, Wales in 1999.

Bata and billiards became an instant nationwide hit because everybody, and we mean everybody, was able to share in the victory.

Maybe the sec-gen of the Philippine Bowling Congress has his own idea of making bowling widely accepted hereabouts?

Maybe he believed selfishness and discrimination would help popularize the sport among Filipinos?

Maybe Steve Hontiveros, still giddy with success, would next think of sending a more responsible take-charge guy to international tournaments?

Mr. Hontiveros, when he finally returns, would do well to first ascertain the fairness of his local bowling officials.

Again, all this may sound too petty, even pure nonsense. But, still, it has got to be brought out in the open.

Why? Coz this is about values and priorities.

This is also about character-and the lack of it.

SPORTSWATCH

12 Filipino jins go for gold in world tilt

TWELVE of the country's leading jins plunge into action in the 16th men and 9th women's World Taekwondo Championships starting today in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. The athletes and officials, known as the Petron Philippine Team, are Roberto Cruz, Tshomlee Go, Manuel Rivero Jr., Donald David Geisler, Alexander Briones, Ernesto Juan Mendoza III, Eva Marie Ditan, Daleen Cordero, Jasmin Strachan, Mary Antoinette Rivero, Sally Solis and Veronica Domingo, Manolo Gabriel, team manager; Kim Tae-hyung and Victor Emmanuel Veneracion, men's coaches; Jesus Morales III, women's coach; and Caesar Mateo, international referee. Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert N. Aventajado is optimistic of the team's chances in the tournament, which has lured 80 countries. "Our team has always been rated among the top contenders in this event," said PTA vice president and delegation head Sung Chon Hong. Cruz, six-time Southeast Asian Games gold medalist, bagged three silvers (1995, 1997, 1999) and a bronze (2001) in the world championships. In the 2001 World Cup, Tshomlee Go also won a bronze medal.The team is sponsored by the Philippine Sports Competition and Petron.

Courageous Tan ends Anton streak

ROSARIO, Batangas—Mato Tan of Matonetics went too fast and too furious in the race that nearly cost his life. But it was worth all the risks for his first big win in the National Touring Car Championship yesterday in the fifth leg of the Casino Filipino Grand Prix at the Batangas Racing Circuit here. Tan earned the distinction as the first driver to snap the nine-race winning streak of Carlos Anton, of Red Horse-Gulf Oil-MP Turbo, in this series sponsored by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Toyota Motor Phils., Kilton Motors, MOF Company, Norkis Yamaha, Pagcor Sports and Addict Mobile. Edgesports' George Apacible pulled off a sweep in the Formula Toyota Cup over Arvin Drueco of Casino Filipino-AF3,Edgesport-Caltex, while Caltex Havoline's Oscar Aguilar and Miguel Lazaro split honors in the National Junior Touring Car Championship.

Vigan venue for presidential clay shoot

VIGAN, Ilocos Sur will host world-class caliber trap and skeet shooters from 10 countries vying in the Presidential Clay Shooting Championships slated at the Baluarte Shooting Range from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4. National adviser for Northern Luzon and tournament host Luis "Chavit" Singson said this a great opportunity for Vigan, as well as the Northern Philippines, to be recognized in the Olympic clay shooting circuit. Shooters from Australia, New Zealand, Lebanon, Ireland, India, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei will compete with the Philippine team to be sent to the Vietnam SEA Games. Jethro Dionisio, silver medalist in the 2001 SEA Games and bronze medalist in the 2002 Busan Asian Games for trap shooting, will lead the Philippine team.

Romero shootfest fires off tomorrow

THE REGHIS Romero II Cup pistol, rifle and shotgun shooting competition, dubbed as Balikatan 2003, will be held tomorrow starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Sports Valley Shooting Range in Antipolo City. For inquiries, call Melanie or Olive at 925-3301 to 08.

20 pairs vying in Petron beach volley

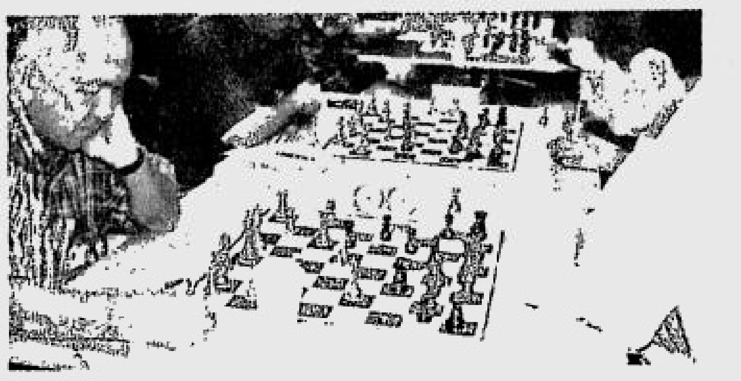
A RECORD 20 teams will see action in the third leg of the 2003 Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament which gets going at the La Salle Greenhills on Sept. 27 and 28. The high turnout more than made up for the absence of back-to-back leg champion San Sebastian, whose players—Patricia Siatan and Jennifer Bohawe—are competing in another collegiate meet. "We've doubled the number of teams this time," said Tisha Abundo of the organizing Volts Management Group during the weekly PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion. Two of the teams entered in the two-day, Petron-sponsored event was with Abundo in the public sports program backed by Red Bull, Agfa Color and Pagcor. The tandem of Lou Margarette Maranon and Gamela Ann Septo of the PSBA is the favorite following the no-show of Siatan and Bohawe. The champions get to take home P10,000 while the runner up receives P5,000.

St. Theresa Class '79 golf winners

ST. THERESA'S College-Manila High School Class '79, which is celebrating its silver anniversary early next year, held the Globe-Telecom 1st Theresian Invitational golf tournament recently at Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club. Winners of the tournament were Raffy Garcia (low gross); BJ Medalla, Mandy Clavio and Rene Villafuerte (men's A, B, and C) and Glenda Daroza (ladies). Other medalists were Ardel de Guzman, Leo Rico, Henry Yu and Sandie Squillantini (1st runners-up) and Ernesto Lim, Nelson Lee, Milet Uy and Bettina Benitez (2nd runners-up). Gil Genio, chief operating officer of Globe Telecom, hit the ceremonial ball with Ambassador Antonio-Cabangon Chua, Gerard Cantada, program director of PJGDA; Mayenne Asuncion-Varua, Theresian alumnus-organizer and lawyer Gani Zulueta of the beneficiary organization Teacher-Mom. STCM High School Class '79 president is Joji Santiago-Yap.

Fun games for Milo Checkmate enrollees

BLITZ chess, problem-solving contests and other fun games await the early enrollees in the sixth series of the Milo Checkmate Saturday clinic, which kicks off on Saturday at three venues. The venues and the schedules of the clinic are the Badminton Bldg. at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, Vito Cruz, Manila (8 a.m.-12 noon); Chowking-Evacom Branch, Sucat, Parañaque (8:30-11-45 a.m.) and at the fourth level of J & F Divino Building at 967 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City (9 a.m.-1 p.m.) or 2-6 p.m.Open to kids who are 5-18 years old, enrollment is in full swing at the MCC office at J & F Divino Bldg. For inquiries, call 826-8560 and 0916-1069.



THE PHILIPPINE Executive Active Chess Express (Peace) is a haven for players like Davao businessman Vicente Almario (left) and Judge Emil Urbi (right). The monthly tournament, organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia and supported by Belgosa Media Systems and Land Bank, will hold its seventh leg at 1 p.m. on Saturday at the Land Bank Plaza in Malate, Manila.

Stags-Knights rubber match up at Cuneta

DEFENDING champion San Sebastian and Letran clash today in a winner-take-all showdown for the title to cap one of the most exciting seasons of the NCAA basketball tournament at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Momentum will be on the side of the three-peat-seeking Stags after leveling the best-of-three series with an 85-77 win but it's no guarantee of a victory in the 3 p.m. encounter.

The Knights took Game 1 in runaway fashion, 89-73, and are hoping to summon the fire and intensity they showed in the title series opener to bring back the crown to Intramuros after a four-year title drought.

"The team's desire to win will be the most crucial factor in Game 3. Let's forget about the statistics in the first two games," said San Sebastian coach Turo Valenzona.

Interestingly, Valenzona is seeking a seventh championship with the Stags, whom he led to five straight titles in the mid-'90s. Overall, the Recto-based dribblers are going for their 12th crown.

Letran coach Louie Alas shared Valenzona's sentiments, pointing out that heart and the drive to accomplish their goal would play an important role in Game 3.

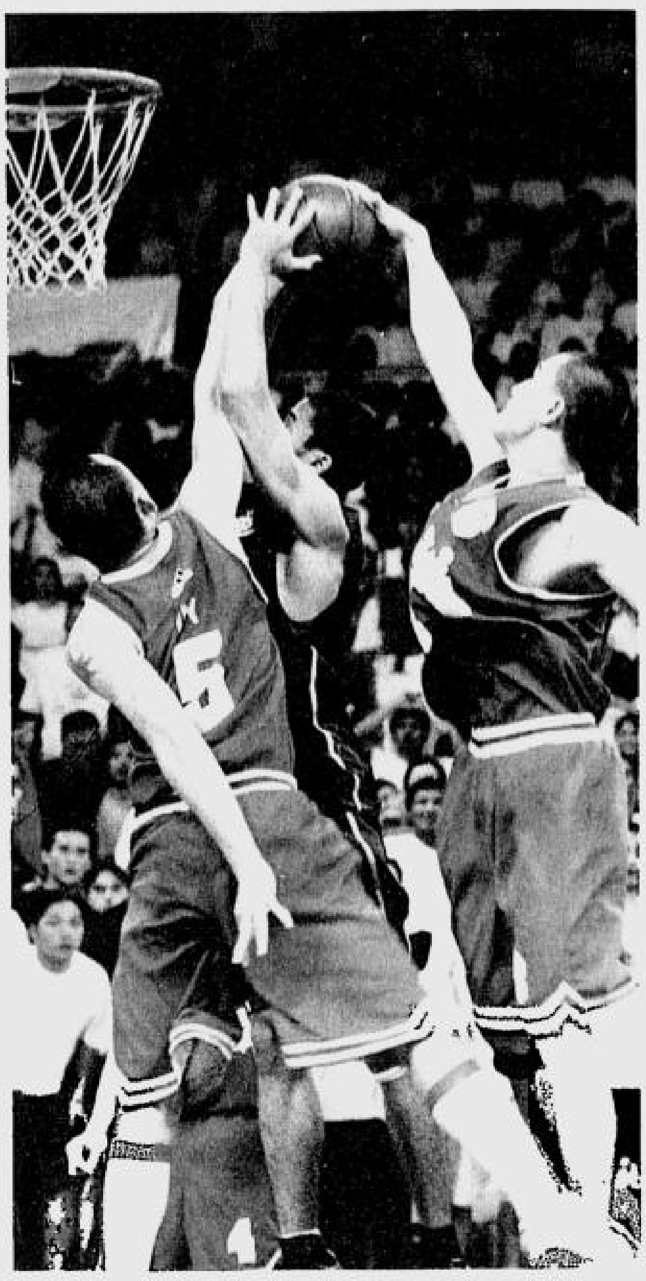
"I've said it before and I'll say it again. The team with the biggest heart will get the championship," said Alas, who spearheaded the Knights to the 1998 crown that Binky Favis duplicated for Letran the next year

Alas also stressed the importance of conditioning, a basic ingredient that would determine the capability of both squads to cope with the pressure of the do-or-die duel.

Reigning season MVP Leomar Najorda, Chris Baluyot, Ren Vicente, Michael Gonzales and the towering Pep Moore will lead the Stags while Alas will pin his hopes on Ronjay Enrile, Eric Rodriguez, Aaron Aban, Jonathan Aldave, Boyet Bautista and rookie Jonathan Pinera.

"They (Stags) possess the height so we will rely again on our speed," said Alas.

June Navarro


STAGS Nicole Uy and Christopher Baluyot reject an undergoal stab by Aaron Aban of the Letran Knights in the dying seconds of Game 2, won by San Sebastian. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Biased judging ruins Gamo bid

XINJIANG, China—Lhyven Salazar went down to a superior Chinese rival, but Ferdie Gamo lost to biased judging as the RP Revicon Team settled for two silver medals at the close Monday of the 2003 Xinjiang International Boxing Championships here.

Gamo poured everything he had and seemingly was in control of his bout against Zhang Vizheng in the bantamweight finals but lost on points while Salazar failed to sustain his form and bowed to World Championships light flyweight silver medalist Zao Shiming.

"*Grabe ang ginawa nila kay* Gamo. *Ang dami ng patama pero hindi nag*-register *sa* computer. *Pero 'pag siya* (Gamo) *naman ang tamaan kahit sampal lang, may puntos na agad ang* China (What they did to Gamo was worse. He landed a lot of punches that did not register in the computer while the Chinese get a point even with a slap)," lamented assistant coach Ronald Chavez.

But Chavez said Salazar lost to the better fighter. "'*Yun ang tunay na talo, pero si* Gamo *sa tingin ng lahat panalo* (Salazar was outclassed but many felt Gamo won)," he added.

With two silvers, the Philippines finished sixth overall in the 11-nation competition that assembled 97 boxers in 11 weight categories.

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PBA sets strict rules for Fil-Fors

THE BOARD of the Philippine Basketball Association has set strict guidelines for applicants with foreign blood starting this season, setting the deadline way ahead of next season's rookie draft scheduled in January.

Fil-foreign players who wish to apply for the 2004 PBA rookie draft are required to submit their documents of citizenship to the league on or before the end of the next month.

All prospective applicants have until Oct. 31 to comply with this directive and be cleared to join the rookie lottery.

Abap eyes twin kill in SEAG, Olympic q'fying

WHILE the country's top amateur boxers are flexing their muscles for the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games in December, there's an even bigger, tougher tournament the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines is looking forward to.

Manny Lopez, Abap president, yesterday said that like the forthcoming SEA Games, the country's hosting of the Asian Boxing Championships in January is also in the Abap priority list.

The ABC, to be hosted by Puerto Princesa in Palawan, will serve as the first of three qualifying tournaments to the 2004 Athens Olympics for Asian boxers. The two other qualifying events will be held in China and Pakistan.

"While everybody is tuned in to the SEA Games this December, we're also busy preparing our boxers for the Olympic qualifying event to be participated in by at least 30 Asian countries," Lopez said in the weekly forum sponsored by Agfa, Red Bull and Pagcor at the Manila Pavilion.

The Philippines is hoping to send at least five boxers to the Athens Olympics as it continues its search for the elusive gold.

Tuñacao seeks WBC Int'l crown vs Indon

MORE than just winning the vacant World Boxing Council (WBC) International superfly title, Malcolm Tuñacao hopes to use his coming fight with Indonesian Ali Rohmad as springboard for a crack at another world championship.

Tuñacao headlines Friday's "The Great Encounter" boxing card at the Ynares Center where he'll trade punches with Rohmad in a 12-round bout for the crown vacated by Gerry Peñalosa.

And a victory by the 24-year-old former WBC flyweight champion, currently ranked fourth in the world, would have him moving closer to a possible title clash with Peñalosa conqueror Masamori Tokuyama of Japan.

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Compiled by L. Manguiat

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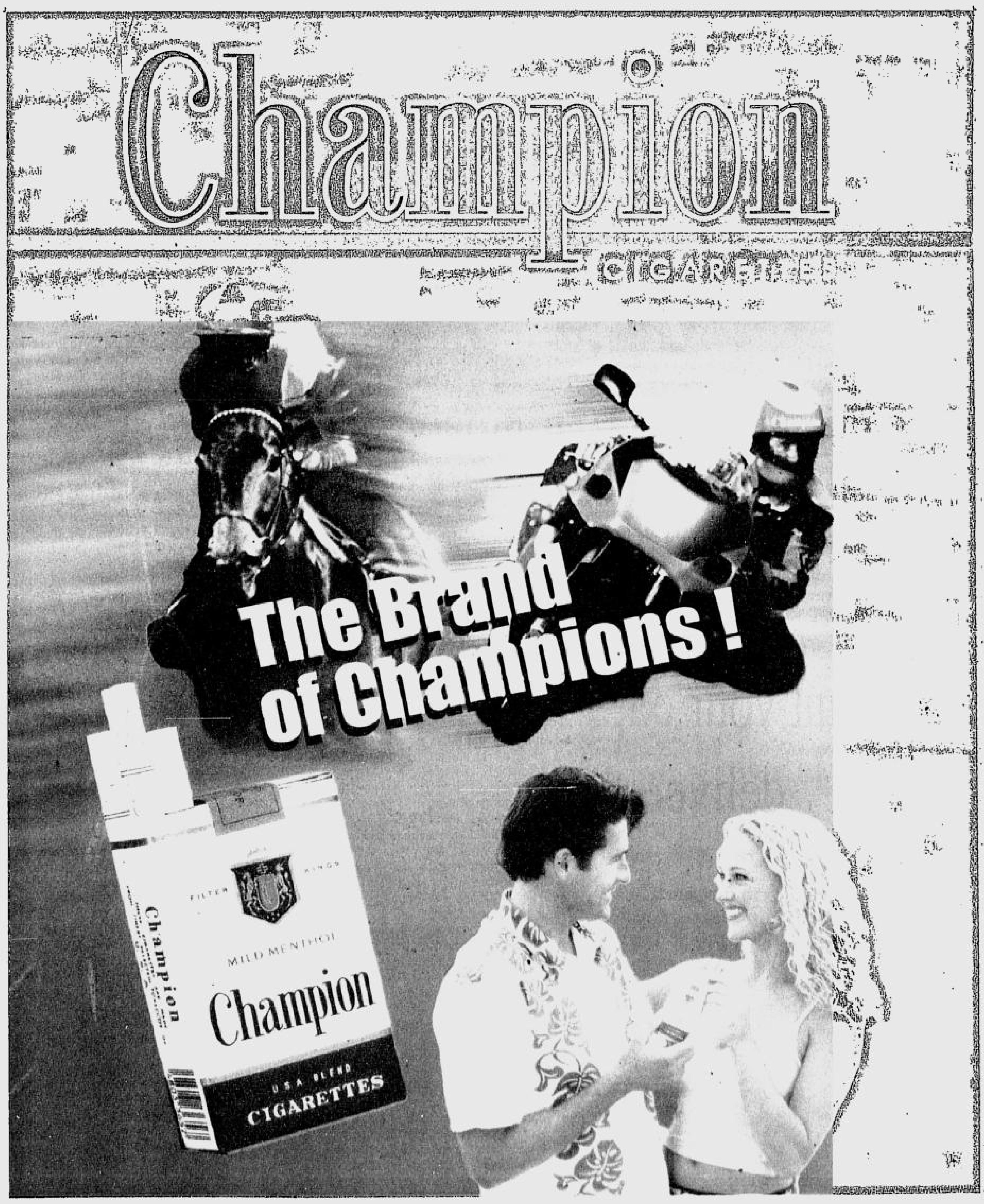

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Tigers taste 118th loss, set AL record

Marlins lead Phillies in NL wild-card race

KANSAS CITY, Missouri—The Detroit Tigers set an American League record with their 118th loss, falling to the Kansas City Royals 12-6 Monday night as Raul Ibanez and Rondell White drove in three runs each.

Detroit (38-118) has lost 10 straight, one short of its season high, and 16 of its last 17. The Tigers must win five of their final six games to avoid tying the post-1900 major league record set by the 1962 New York Mets, who went 40-120.

White went 4-for-4, Carlos Beltran homered, and Joe Randa went 3-for-3 for the Royals, who trail AL Central-leading Minnesota by five games with six to play.

With its 82nd win, Kansas City ensured its first winning year since going 64-51 in the strike-shortened 1994 season.

Jeremy Affeldt (7-6), the second of four Royals pitchers, threw two scoreless innings.

Gary Knotts (3-8) gave up six runs, five hits and three walks in four-plus innings.

In Boston, Manny Ramirez, Trot Nixon and David Ortiz homered to lead the Red Sox to a 7-5 win over Baltimore and protect Boston's lead in the AL wild-card race.

Boston stayed 2 1/2 games ahead of Seattle in the wild-card standings with six to play. The Mariners beat Anaheim.

Jeff Suppan (3-3) allowed two runs and six hits in six innings.

Jason Johnson (10-9) gave up six runs—five earned—and seven hits before leaving four batters into the sixth. He has not won in eight starts since Aug. 10.

Byung-Hyun Kim pitched a perfect ninth for his 16th save in 19 chances.

Luis Matos and Jack Cust homered for the Orioles.

In Anaheim, California, Jamie Moyer became the fifth pitcher with a 20-win season in his 40s, and Randy Winn hit an inside-the-park homer as Seattle beat Anaheim, 5-1.

Bret Boone homered off Jarrod Washburn (10-15) and had three hits. The Mariners are four games back of first-place Oakland in the AL West with five to play.

In Atlanta, Derrek Lee homered and had four RBIs as the Florida Marlins beat the Atlanta Braves 6-3 Monday night to move one game ahead of Philadelphia in the National League wild-card race.

The Marlins host the Phillies for three games beginning Tuesday night.

Before an announced crowd of 17,345—the smallest in Turner Field history—Lee hit an RBI single in the first. After a 53-minute rain delay, Miguel Cabrera added a two-run single off Mike Hampton (14-8), who gave up six runs and 11 hits in five innings.

Mark Redman (14-9) pitched seven innings, allowing Gary Sheffield's three-run homer in the sixth, and Ugueth Urbina worked the ninth for his third save. *AP*

RODDICK: Hamstring injury.

Roddick quits, fined

minnow NONTHABURI, Thailand—US Open tennis champion Andy Roddick withdrew from the Thailand Open on Monday, citing a hamstring injury.

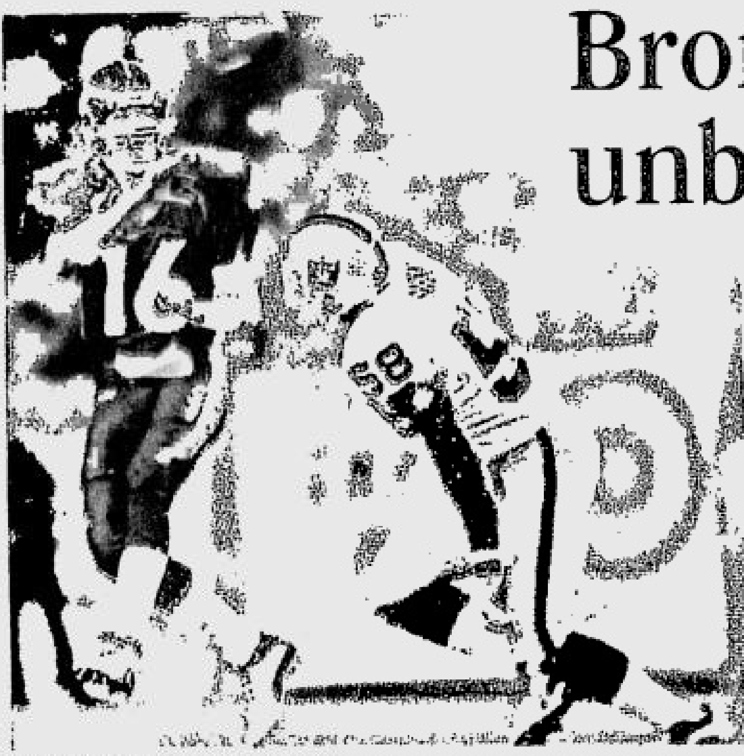
No. 2-ranked Roddick said his doctors had advised him to rest for a week, ATP executive vice president of players services Weller Evans told reporters.

"Obviously, everybody is disappointed that Andy will not be participating, with the possible exception of the other players," said Evans.

He said the ATP would fine Roddick US$40,000 for his withdrawal from the event, which began Monday.

World No. 1 and French Open champion Juan Carlos Ferrero and No. 6 Carlos Moya, both from Spain, were scheduled to arrive Tuesday and play

Broncos keep unbeaten slate



BRONCOS' quarterback Jake Plummer (left) fires off a pass as Raiders' linebacker Napoleon Harris applies pressure. AP

DENVER—Jake Plummer—sore shoulder and all—threw two first-quarter touchdown passes and ran for another Monday night as Denver improved its unbeaten record by routing Oakland 31-10.

Plummer also broke one of John Elway's team records with a 40-yard scramble that set up a field goal. Elway's longest run of his 16-year career was 34 yards.

This game was all but over by the end of a first period in which the Broncos (3-0) took a 21-0 lead, outgaining the Raiders 170 yards to seven and scoring on all three of their possessions.

The scores came on an 18-yard pass from Plummer to Shannon Sharpe; a 44-yard pass to Ashley Lelie and a 6-yard scramble set up by another 44-yard pass to Lelie. The first TD was a short flip, but the two 44-yarders were both long strikes. *AP*

US, other top seeds trim World Cup foes

NEW YORK—Japan and North Korea lead their groups. So do Russia and Brazil.

This isn't how things were supposed to look after the first two days of the 2003 Women's World Cup.

The top four seeds at the tournament — defending champion United States, 1999 runner-up China, former winner Norway and European titlst Germany— each won their opening games over the weekend, but all trail on goal difference.

The next set of games, scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday, is likely to put things back in order as teams try to advance to the quarterfinals.

"Our first priority is to qualify for the next stage of the tournament and our approach is to play aggressive attacking football," said China coach Ma Liangxing, whose team beat Ghana 1-0 Sunday.

Sun Wen, who was voted the best player at the last World Cup, scored China's lone goal. Still, she was unhappy with her performance.

China is second to Russia, which beat Australia 2-1, in Group D. The Chinese face Australia on Thursday while Ghana takes on Russia.

Mia Hamm, the Fifa Player of Year, didn't score for the United States, but she did set up all three goals as the Americans topped Sweden—probably the best team in the tournament that failed to win—3-1.

"She single-handedly put pressure on the Swedish defense," United States coach April Henrichs said.

The United States trails North Korea, which beat Nigeria 3-0, on goal difference in Group A. On Thursday, the Americans face Nigeria while North Korea takes on Sweden.

Norway and Germany also started with impressive wins, but still find themselves in second place.

Norway, which won the second World Cup in 1995, beat France 2-0 in the tournament's opening match in Group B. But Brazil, which won the Pan American Games gold medal last month, got a pair of goals from Katia and another from Marta to top South Korea 3-0. *AP*

Lyceum, Miriam, RTU triumph again

THE DEFENDING champions of the 34th WNCA-adidas tournament resumed their winning ways while Rizal Technological University, St. Scholastica's College and De La Salle-Zobel also triumphed last Sunday.

Lyceum of the Philippines and Miriam College, last season's basketball and volleyball winners of the seniors' and juniors' division, respectively, and midget volleyball defending champion St. Benedict College trounced their rivals to preserve their unblemished records.

Lyceum started the seniors matches in volleyball at the Chiang Kai Shek College gym with a 25-8, 25-7, 25-9 win over College of St. Benilde to post a 7-0 card.

RTU still leads though at 8-0 after trouncing host Siena College of Quezon City, 25-18, 25-17, 25-13.

The Lady Pirates made it 8-0 in seniors basketball at the St. Scho gym following a 61-35 beating of SBC, which tasted a second straight loss and fell to third place at 6-2.

Miriam is 6-0 in both events, beating De La Salle-Zobel in basketball, 71-53, and SBC in volleyball, 25-10, 25-22, 25-16.

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Bush should resolve 'toxic' issue

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DURING his short visit here on Oct. 17, US President George W. Bush will be leaving a lasting legacy to the Filipino people by heeding the call to clean up the nagging problem of toxic waste left by American soldiers in their former military bases at Subic Bay and Clark Field.

In the past, former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada had raised the toxic waste issue with their US counterparts but made little progress.

American officials had claimed the 1947 Philippine-US military bases agreement did not require environmental remediation. Still, it does not mean that the Americans have no moral obligation to extend a helping hand to a longtime ally by cleaning up the toxic waste and providing compensation to and medical treatment of affected residents there.

The reported presence of toxic waste in Subic and Clark has resulted in the deaths and illness of residents, including many children of families who were evacuated to the Clark evacuation area after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991. Only recently, two former Subic base workers died because of alleged toxic contamination.

"There have been more than 80 deaths resulting from drinking contaminated water at Clark," once said American environmentalist Allen Hubbard, a licensed geologist in North and South Carolina and a relative of Major. Harold M. Clark, World War I flyer from whom Clark Air Base was named.

Environmentalists also stressed that toxic chemicals in the water that the people drink and or in the air they breathe have caused leukemia and mental retardation.

The toxic waste issue should be a topic for discussion. Von Hernandez, chair of the People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup and Greenpeace Asia toxic campaign coordinator, said recently that President Macapagal-Arroyo should ask Mr. Bush for a comprehensive and total cleanup of the military bases the Americans left behind in order to preserve the long bond of friendship between the two longtime allies.

I have been writing about the reported presence of hazardous chemicals at Clark and voicing my opposition to building a modern sports complex there because I felt the presence of contaminated chemicals at the sprawling former US base would be harmful to the physical and mental health of Filipino athletes who will be housed while training there. I made this warning for the simple reason that when a potential problem is sensed early it can easily be solved. The toxic problem is a serious matter.

Since 1994, the People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup has been campaigning for the cleanup of the former American bases in the Philippines from toxic and nuclear waste. It was the chief organizer of the First International Forum on US Military Toxics and Bases Cleanup during the Apec meeting in Manila in 1996. It also conducted a health survey of 13 communities around Clark Field headed by renowned Dr. Rosalie Bertell of the International Institute of Concern for Public Health. Majority of the members of the board of directors are from Clark and Subic to ensure that services and resources benefit the communities affected by toxic contamination.

The Task Force is a service institution of more than 3,000 toxic waste victims, survivors and residents living within the areas of Clark and Subic.

***

OLYMPIC TRIVIA. Prior to his vaudeville career with famous dancer Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Eddie Tolan was the most dominant sprinter in the United States from 1929-31 before being dethroned by Ralph Metcalfe in the 1932 season. But in the 1932 Los Angeles Games, the 5-foot-7 Tolan exacted revenge by nosing out Metcalfe in one of the closest 100-meter finals... In London in 1948, Stanley Stanezyk and Harold Sakata won the gold and silver medals, respectively, in the light heavyweight weightlifting division. Sakata went on to achieve greater fame in Hollywood as the evil "Odd Job" in the popular James Bond movie "Goldfinger."'..... Three gas chromatograph/high resolution mass spectrometers (GCHRMS) were used for the firs time at the Olympics during the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Games. The $500,000 drug-testing machines made a dramatic impact the year before when it caught 56 weightlifters using steroids, which help build muscle. Athletes found positive of using performance-enhancing drugs lose their medals on top of a ban from 2 to 4 years.

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BY MR. 999

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3 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 (DOLBY) MEDALLION
3 (DTS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771
1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DOLBY) SWAT
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
3 (DOLBY) SWAT
4

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305
1 (DOLBY) KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 (DTS) SWAT
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 MEDALLION
3 (DTS) FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DTS) MEDALLION
4 KALABIT
5 FIRST TIME

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
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2 KALABIT
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
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2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 KALABIT

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(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 LEGALLY BLONDE
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DTS) KALABIT
4 SWAT

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(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 (DTS) RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 SWAT
3 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 DADDY DAY CARE
3 KALABIT
4 FIRST TIME

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-5001 TO 03
1 (DOLBY EX) KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3
4

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-0121
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 NAKED WEAPON
3 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 (DTS) RESERVE

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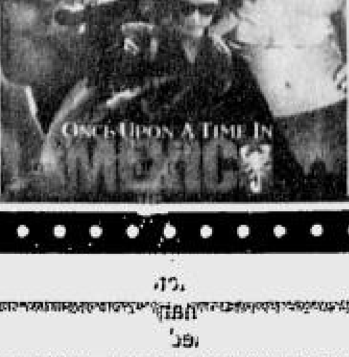
ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice


ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

NOW SHOWING

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SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868
1 BASIC
2 THE MEDALLION
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FIRST TIME
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
7 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
8 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 S.W.A.T.
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FIRST TIME
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
7 THE MEDALLION
8 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
9 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
10 BASIC

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749
1 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 S.W.A.T.
6 THE MEDALLION
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
8 BASIC
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
11 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
12 FIRST TIME

SM CITY MANILA
5239240
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 THE MEDALLION
3 BASIC
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
7 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
8 NOWHERE IN AFRICA
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 INNER SENSES
11 FIRST TIME
12 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401
1 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
(FOR SEAT RESERVATION CALL 6830630)
2 BASIC
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 CINE EUROPA
7 NOWHERE IN AFRICA
8 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 THE MEDALLION
11 INNER SENSES
12 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295462
1 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 INNER SENSES
3 FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 BASIC
7 FREDDY VS. JASON
8 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888
1 BASIC
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 PEOPLE I KNOW
5 THE MEDALLION
6 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 FREDDY VS. JASON
9 FIRST TIME
10 INNER SENSES

SM CITY CEBU
2313878
1 BASIC
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
3 DADDY DAY CARE
4 S.W.A.T.
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
6 FIRST TIME
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 NAKED WEAPON

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422
1 DADDY DAY CARE
2 RESERVED
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
6 S.W.A.T.
7 RESERVED
8 SPY KIDS 3-D

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 FIRST TIME
5 VISIBLE SECRET
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975
1 FIRST TIME
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FREDDY VS. JASON

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
3 FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998
1 S.W.A.T.
2 DADDY DAY CARE
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 BASIC
5 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS

SM BICUTAN
776-3055
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 BASIC
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884
1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 DADDY DAY CARE
4 S.W.A.T.

CINE EUROPA
September 24, 2003 Wenesday SM Megamall Cinema 6

CINE EUROPA 6

The Praying Mantis (Austria)
2:00 p.m.
Captains of April (Portugal)
4:30 p.m.
Adult Behavior (Sweden)
7:00 p.m.
Charlotte Gray (UK)
9:30 p.m.

ADMISSION IS FREE

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3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 BASIC
7 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
8 PEOPLE I KNOW
9 NOWHERE IN AFRICA
10 INNER SENSES

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Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 THE MEDALLION
4 PEOPLE I KNOW
5 INNER SENSES
6 BASIC
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

Metro East Marcos hway 682-8193/99 / 682-8280
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
5 BASIC
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
7 THE MEDALLION
8 1ST TIME

Novaliches 935-3229 / 31
1 THE MEDALLION
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 BASIC
8 1ST TIME

Star Mills San Fernando Pampanga (045)875-1927 (045)961-5270	Imus (046)471-8188 / 875-5858
1 VISIBLE SECRET	1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	2 1ST TIME
3 MR. BONES	3 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
4 THE MEDALLION	4 THE MEDALLION
5 1ST TIME	5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

Bacolod (034)441-0458/59	Iloilo (033)336-8070 to 78
1 SPY KIDS 3D	1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2	2 S.W.A.T.
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	3 SPY KIDS 3D
4 DADDY DAY CARE	4 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
5 S.W.A.T.	5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN	6 DADDY DAY CARE

Sta. Rosa Laguna (049)837-0907	Malabon Citisquare 288-0985/2575
1 2 1ST TIME	1 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 KALABIT	2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 THE MEDALLION	3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	

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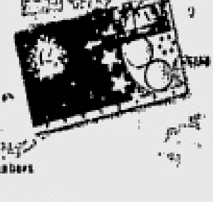

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Sta. Rosa (049) 8370907 * Malabon 2883575

at all Robinsons Movieworld-Cinemas

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SHOW TIME

itchyworms! launches music video of indie single 'Buwan'

THE ALTERNATIVE band itchyworms! will launch the music video of its new independently produced single "Buwan" on Friday, Sept. 26, at Millenia Cafe on Kamuning Road in Quezon City.

"Buwan" has been on NU 107's Midnight Countdown for six weeks running. The video of "Buwan" was directed by filmmaker/musician Marie Jamora, who also directed the music video of "Antipara," a cut from the group's debut album. The new video was edited by filmmaker/musician Edsel Abesamis.

In true indie fashion, the video was shot guerilla-style on a tiny budget.

"Buwan" comes piping hot from the home studio of the quartet of Jugs Jugueta, guitar; Jazz Nicolas, drums; Chino Singson, guitar; and Kelvin Yu, bass. Written by drummer/vocalist Jazz Nicolas, it is about missing a loved one who has gone away or has just ended the relationship.

The itchyworms! was nominated in the 2002 Awit Awards for best alternative recording for "Antipara." The band also won the NU107 Rock Award for best new artist in December 2001.

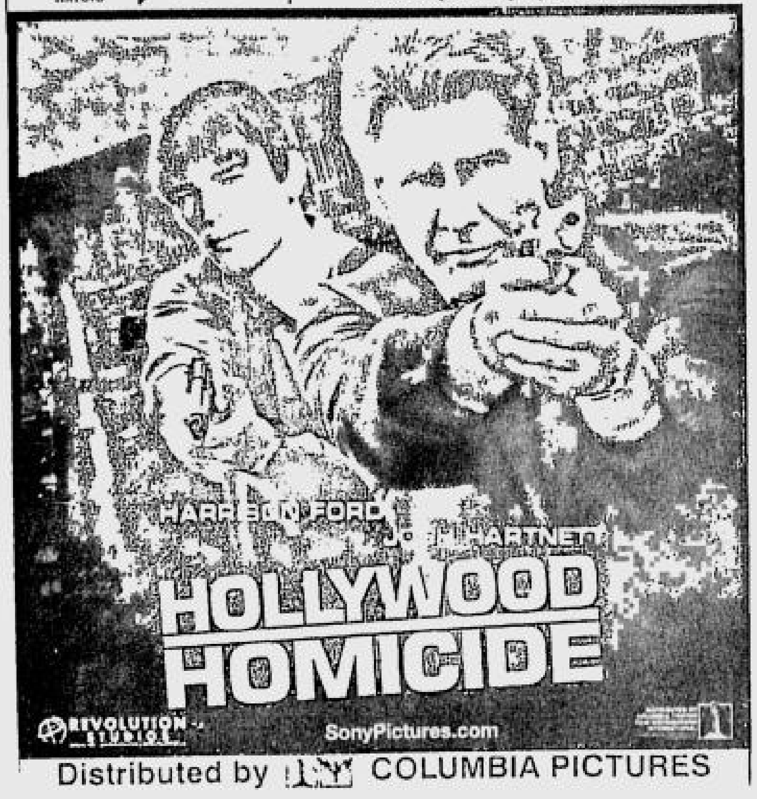
The "Buwan" video launch is presented by NU107, Campus Radio, LSFM 97.1, Pinoyexchange, Peyups.com, Pinoycentral, Cinnamonrole Designs, Indiefilipino.com, Ateneo Musician's Pool and Philmusic.com.

The CD single contains three tracks—the original version of "Buwan," an acoustic version, and a surprise bonus track.

For more info, log on to www.itchworms.com or text the itchyworms! hotline at 0916-2437873.

itchyworms!

"2 Thumbs Up!" for Harrison Ford & Josh Hartnett
2ND MAXIMUM ACTION WEEK!
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult



Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

OPENS TODAY!
R-13 BY THE MTRCB
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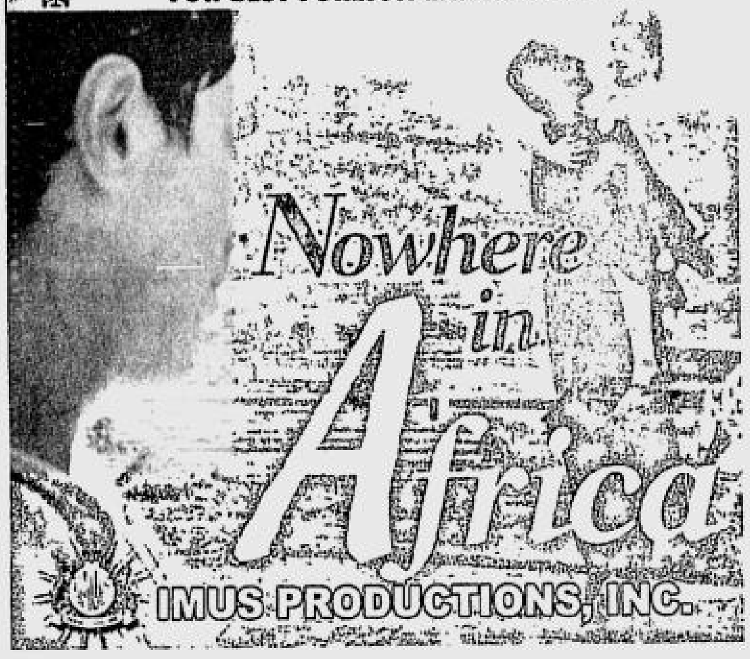

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
Ali 2	1ST TIME
Ali 3	THE MEDALLION
Ali 4	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
Ali 5	FREDDY VS. JASON
Ali 6	BASIC
Ali 7	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

ARANETA COLISEUM

SEPT 24	UAAP. WOMEN / JRS. FINALS
SEPT 25	UAAP: FEU VS. UE / ADMU VS. DLSU
SEPT 26	JUST ONCE . GREATEST HITS REPEAT
SEPT 27	UAAP: FEU VS. UE / ADMU VS. DLSU
SEPT 28	PBA : FED EX VS. ALASKA

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SI
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATA
CORONET A	LIGAYA KATUMBAS AY BUHAY
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTI
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
B	LIGAYA KATUMBAS AY BUHAY
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20 79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANAT
CINEMA-2	LIGAYA KATUMBAS ANG BUHAY
CINEMA-3	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BASIC
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	FIRST TIME
CINEMA-6	2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
CINEMA-7	KALABIT
CINEMA-8	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JASON VS. FREDDY
CINEMA-12	MEDALLION
CINEMA-14	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-15	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PIÑAS)	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-1	SWAT
CINEMA-2	MEDALLION
CINEMA-4	LEGALLY BLONDE 2

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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CINEMA 1	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 11:05, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 R18
CINEMA 2	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00 GP

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MUSIC MUSEUM

SEPT 19 & 20	PILITA CORRALES "THE SHOW	9:00PM
SEPT 26	BANDS "POSITIVELY LIVE"	7:00PM

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POWER PLANT
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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

BASIC PG13 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO R18 11:40, 1:45, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA GP 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40
PEOPLE I KNOW R18 11:30, 1:30, 3:40 5:50, 8:00, 10:10	NOWHERE IN AFRICA R13 12:20, 3:20, 6:20, 9:20	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE PG13 12:20, 2:45, 5.10, 7:35, 10:00

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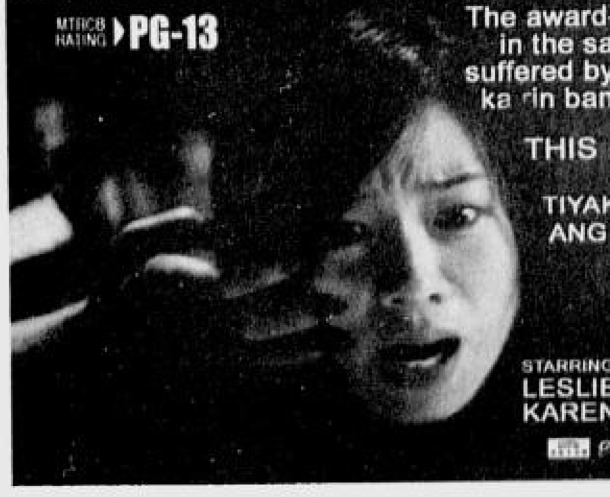
LESLIE CHEUNG
KARENA LAM
DIRECTED BY
LO CHI-LEUNG



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Anthony LaPaglia, Geoffrey Rush & Barbara Hershey

A woman disappears.
Four marriages are drawn into a tangled web of love, deceit, sex & death.
Not all of them will survive.

"TWO THUMBS UP!"
— Ebert & Roeper

September 24 - 7:00 PM
Greenbelt 1 Cinema 2
*Coffee Club Discussion after the screening

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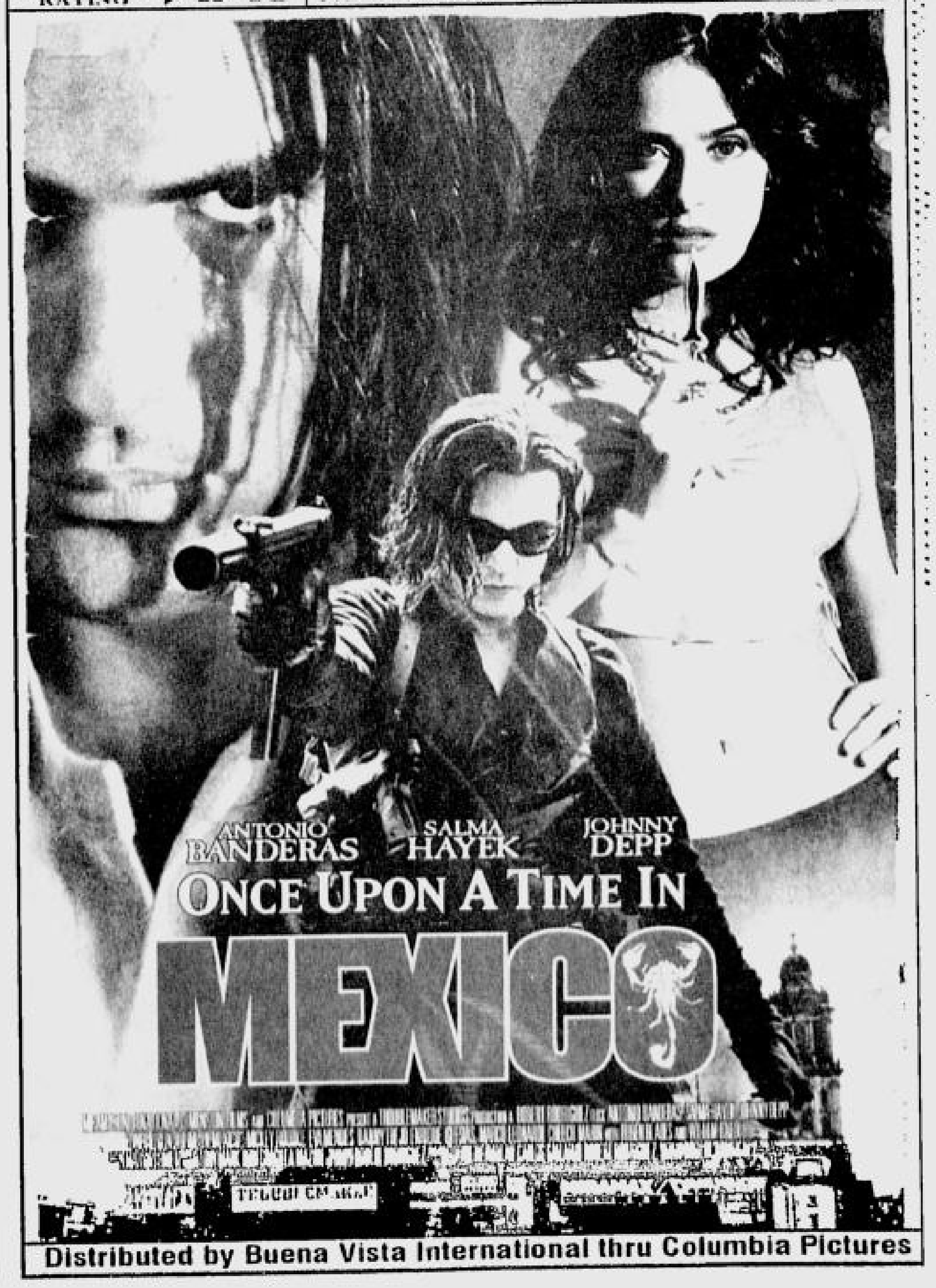


Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

Grab-bag approach and moments of truth

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FIRST, the new show, "Xtra Challenge," got a bunch of macho men to do so-called women's work. On its second week, the "reality challenge" program made four young people pretend to be *taong grasa* and live off their wits and the kindness of charitable strangers.

Just last week "Xtra Challenge" got six housemaids to compete for the title of "Super Inday." They were subjected to a series of tests, some logical and others ludicrous, as well as to scathing treatment from three *mayordomas*.

Of the three competitions, the most viewer-friendly to date is the "*atsay* challenge." After viewing it a couple of times, however, we felt that it tended to poke cruel fun at its contestants.

They were "game" and "sport" and all that, but the *mayordomas* badgered them too enthusiastically, with some hair-pulling thrown in for good measure.

Now, fun is fun, but there was the tendency to look down on the maids, despite the best efforts of the program's hosts, **Paolo Bediones** and **Miriam Quiambao**, to keep things above-board.

We saw that this wasn't due to an inherently mean-spirited bent on the show's part, but was perhaps the inadvertent result of the program's constant and desperate effort to generate laughter, and thus entertainment.

Still, the results can be objectionable and demeaning, so a modification of the program's thrust is in order.

On the show's first three weeks, we can generally observe that, both as a game show and a reality program, "Xtra Challenge" is muddled in its choice of tests. As earlier observed, some of them were logical, but others turned out to be ludicrous.

Why did the show go into them? Because it wanted to make viewers laugh, or otherwise react strongly to what the program was doing. This was the operative principle, so any and all approaches were welcome, as long as they generated the desired avid response.

So, the show ends up a mess—but the people behind it don't seem to care. Their priority appears to be to keep things eventful, so factors like unity and consistency aren't their top priorities.

Despite this grab-bag approach, "Xtra Challenge" has come up with a number of moments of truth. In the "*machonurin*" challenge, the men ended up with a clearer appreciation of "women's work."

In the *taong grasa* episodes, the contestants realized the difficulty of being alone, adrift and "invisible" in the big city's mean streets.

And in the "*atsay* challenge," the young housemaids' determination and strong work ethic shone through.

Let's hope that, in future "challenges," these plus points can be sustained and added to, without subjecting the contestants to excessively strenuous tests and indignities.

New 'chinovelas'

GMA 7 has started telecasting three new "chinovelas:" Weekdays at 3 p.m., "Secretly in Love" tells the story of Wang Jing, a rich girl who loves Hsui Li, a handsome pianist, but is too shy to reveal her feelings. She disguises herself as a boy, goes to study at his school and even becomes his roommate!

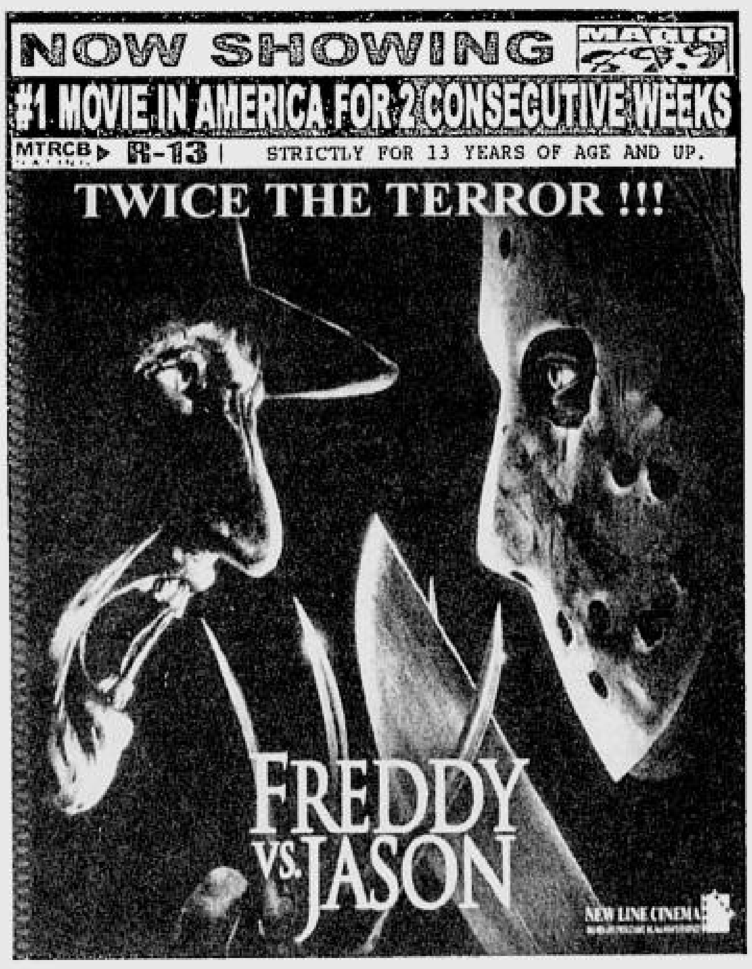
At 3:30 p.m., "Love Talks," a workplace romance, has its female lead character, Xu Nuo, getting stuck in traffic on her way to a job interview. She discovers that she has left important papers at home, so she borrows the cell phone of a handsome businessman to call home. However, before she can give him back his phone, the traffic light signals "go," and he drives off.

Later, she discovers that the mysterious stranger is advertising executive Anson Gao, the very person who will conduct her interview!

He rejects her, but Xu Nuo still gets hired with the help of the general manager, Zhou Jin, who assigns her as Anson's assistant. His hidden agenda: Anson is his chief rival in the company, and giving him an inexperienced assistant could adversely affect his work and pull him down.

At 5:45 p.m., "My Love Cindy" posits the question: What if the guy you like is smitten by the girl you hate most?

Our heroines, Song-Yi and Hee Won, are rivals, with Hee-Won always getting the boys Song-Yi has a crush on. But a new guy in school has eyes only for Song-Yi, who rescues him from trouble. Still, Hee-Won refuses to give up.



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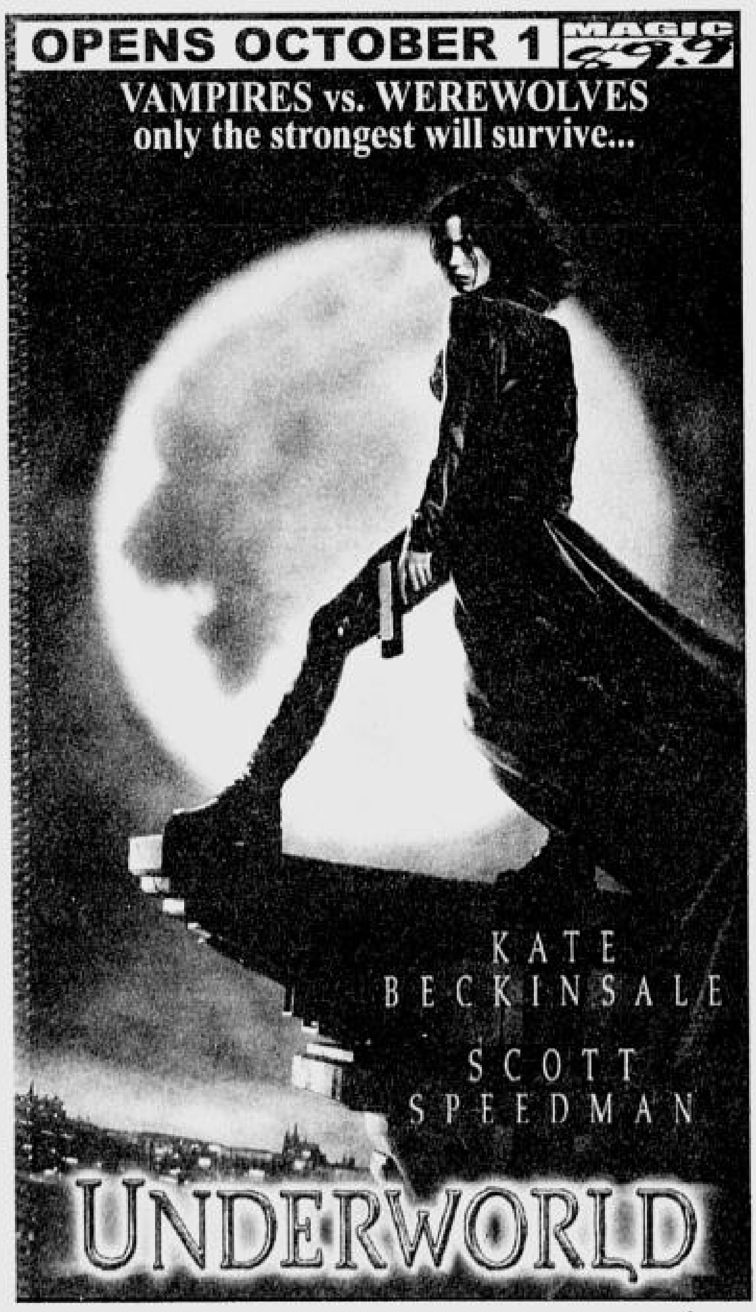

OPENS OCTOBER 1 MAGIC 89.9
VAMPIRES vs. WEREWOLVES
only the strongest will survive...
KATE BECKINSALE
SCOTT SPEEDMAN
UNDERWORLD

SHOW TIME

Hotdogs and heartbreak pay off for Anna Fegi

By Nini Valera

SINGER Anna Fegi ate noodles and hotdogs to survive.

This was five years ago when Anna left Cebu and made Manila her home.

"I rented a room on Boni Avenue in Mandaluyong," said Anna, 26. "I ate noodles and hotdogs every day. They were all I could afford. I ate so much noodles and hotdogs that a lump formed in my breast. We thought it was a cyst, but the doctor said it was an accumulation of fluids from the food I ate.

"I had experiences like that. For me to survive, I had to be *kuripot* (stingy) and wise. But it paid well in the end."

In January, she will be moving to her own condominium unit, also in Mandaluyong. Just recently, she bought a high-end Toyota Altis, which she thought cost her too much money. The Altis replaced a Honda City, which was stolen last January.

She also lost her second boyfriend shortly after she lost her car.

"I lost the car on Jan. 23 and on Jan. 25, I had a concert in Hard Rock," she recalled. "The concert was a hit. It was a very good show because I was feeling bad, and I always have good shows when I'm feeling bad."

Anna sings sad songs and weepy ballads. She mourns a heart that's been broken three times, and her pain shines through in her performances.

"My pain helped me in my work," she said. "When I broke off with my first boyfriend, my first serious relationship, I just wanted to sing. I didn't want to talk to people. I didn't care how I looked. I just wanted to live on stage. I just wanted to keep on singing the whole day."

Reflecting on her failed relationships, Anna said: "I'm the kind of person who blames myself if something goes wrong. I'm serious. I don't believe in flings. If I allowed myself to be in a relationship, it should work. I'm too focused on it. My friends tell me I give too much.

"I'm too sensitive. I'm too emotional. I worry too much. I easily get affected by other people's troubles." What hurts most, she said, is she never looked for these relationships.

"They just came," she laughed.

SURVIVOR. Fegi combines being thrifty and wise in order to survive.

Anna has harnessed her pain to produce her second album, "Straight Ahead." As the title says, she is hoping for a show biz future that just goes straight ahead.

Anna Fegi is performing all Mondays of September at Merk's, at Greenbelt 3 in Makati City.

2ND WEEK MAGIC 89.9
MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
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STAR-STUDDED 'BASKETBALL HATAW!'
Celebrities showed off their hardcourt skills and entertained their fans and basketball enthusiasts alike in a fund-raising game called "Basketball Hataw!" recently held at Siena College in Quezon City and organized by Councilor Bernadette "BH" Herrera of the city's first district for the benefit of the Bagong Henerasyon Foundation. The District I Selection Team won over the All-Star Team of Jay Manalo, Bearwyn Meily, Ace Espinosa, Yul Servo, Jeffrey Tam, Allen Dizon, Carlo Maceda, Vhong Navarro, Brod Pete, Dinky Doo Jr., Onyok Velasco and Luis Alandy. The event was sponsored by Rainforest Mineral Water, PCSO, Pagcor, Cali Shandy, Crimson Clothing, Burger King, McDonald's, Avon and Uratex.

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DID YOU KNOW...

Bench top honcho Ben Chan reportedly paid F4's Jerry Yan P13 million to be the next Bench model. Actor Richard Gomez and wife Lucy Torres flew to Taiwan last week to interview the Taiwanese star for "S-Files."

Yan is reportedly coming to Manila on November.

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ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

ABS-CBN returns to Star Awards to 'correct the past'

By Marinel R. Cruz

ABS-CBN hopes that its return to the Star Awards for TV this year, after it broke away from the awards body for eight years, would help "correct the past" and also help professionalize the industry.

"I think we made a statement when we decided not to join (Star Awards) for eight years," Charo Santos-Concio, ABS-CBN executive vice president for entertainment, told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday. "We did it in the interest of fair play."

The network stopped joining the Philippine Movie Press Club (PMPC) Star Awards for TV in 1995, reportedly because the coveted award for best balanced programming had always been given to its rival network, GMA 7.

"But now, that statement has been made," Santos said. "We'd like to be able to move forward with the hope that they (PMPC) would be fair to everyone.

"There's really no point in creating enemies," she added. "We want to be able to build bridges."

The host of the long-running "Maalaala Mo Kaya" said, "Management saw the positive side of getting back into the Star Awards competition. We hope that things would become even more positive and professional."

She said that with the network's rejoining the Star Awards, "we would be able to correct the past, move forward and become more professional for the sake of the industry."

Santos, a former movie actress, herself won several acting awards, including one for best actress in Asia, for her performance in her first movie, Mike de Leon's "Itim." She was also widely nominated for her role in another De Leon opus, "Kisapmata."

Santos said competition should always inspire one to do better, like in the case of her 12-year-old weekly anthology, "Maalaala Mo Kaya," or "MMK."

After lording it over the Thursday night prime time for years, "MMK" is now up against a very formidable competition in Mel Tiangco's "Magpakailanman" on GMA 7.

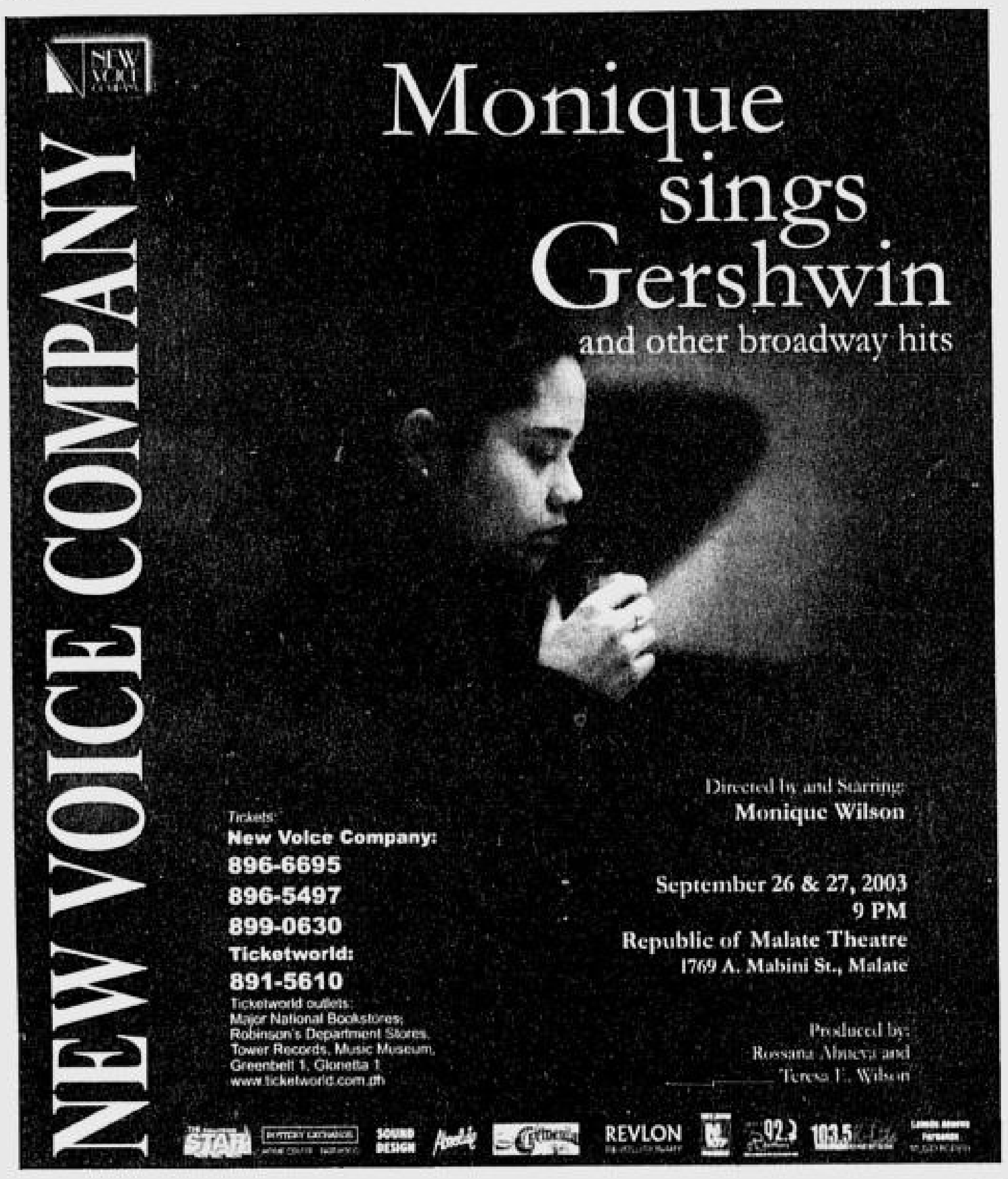
"In order to stay on top, we should be open to changes," Santos said. In the case of "MMK," she said, one big change is dramatizing the lives of celebrities and not only ordinary letter senders like it had been doing for years. "Magpakailanman" is doing the same.

"I always try to do what's best and give my best to my viewers," Santos said. "When I feel that it's time for me to take a graceful bow, I'll take it. But I see that the program is still well supported by the audience that has been following it for the past 12 years.

"As much a possible," she added, "we don't want to hurt people's feelings. We want to inspire them, give them hope. We want to show the triumph of the spirit over difficulties, handicap or poverty."

STAYING ON TOP means being open to change, says ABS-CBN EVP Santos and "MMK" host.

JOEL SOL CRUZ



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REVLON

SHOW TIME

CONFIDENCE MEN. Initial fears gave way to confidence for (clockwise from front left) Marco, Rico J., Hajji, Rey and Nonoy.

'Just Once' again, and again

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor

BACKSTAGE, before curtains went up for "Greatest Hits Just Once the Concert" last Aug. 2 at the Araneta Coliseum, the show's five stars had mixed emotions.

Nonoy Zuñiga was excited. Rey Valera was crossing his fingers, hoping that the venue would be filled.

Marco Sison was worried. "50-50 *ang* feeling *ko*," he recalled later, shaking his head. "Our fans may not be there anymore."

But Rico Puno felt so sure of the positive outcome of the concert. "I never doubted our fans' loyalty," he said. "I always knew they would be there to support us."

Hajji Alejendro had a similar optimism, but he still felt anxious. "I always feel like an upstart every time I do a show," he confessed. "I feel like a work in progress, that's why I always have passion for my work."

Then, shared Nonoy, they had a group hug and chanted: "This is not just a job that we have to do. We'll play for the audience."

When the spotlight finally found them and they saw for themselves that people from different age groups and backgrounds filled the Big Dome to the rafters, Rico, Hajji, Rey, Nonoy and Marco were all on Cloud Nine.

"Our fans are still there," Marco said with a smile.

Hajji nodded and said, "I was reassured that what the movie, 'Field of Dreams,' says is true: 'If you build it, they will come.' They really came."

Rey likewise had a realization. "I felt proud because it was an affirmation of my belief that Filipinos really prefer listening to ballads."

"And they were just waiting for an occasion like our concert," offered Nonoy. And Rico added, "We perked up the audience's memories of the '70s. And at the same time, we shared with the young viewers what music during their parents' time was like."

A repeat of the sold-out concert was therefore inevitable. On Friday, Sept. 26, the five performers are set to conquer the Araneta Coliseum once again, this time with a lot more confidence. And later, they will try to conquer the US, too, as Viva Concerts brings the show to Filipinos in the States.

The five men said they have retained the majority of the original repertoire. "We'll just add more medleys of our signature songs," said Marco.

"We'll also improve our 'influences medley,' where we sang some of the songs of our favorite artists," said Hajji.

Rey happily reported that his kids will perform his hits "Maging Sino Ka Man" and "Pangako sa 'Yo" with him. John Valor (or Belok) will be on keyboards, Joan Valerie (Lei-Lei) on guitar, Greta Mae (Greta) on drums and Clarisse (Chi) on second keyboards.

"We were supposed to do that number in the first Greatest Hits show last August, but the kids felt they weren't 'ready yet,'" explained the amused dad.

Second-generation singers Rachel Alejandro, Tosca Puno and Allain Sison will reprise their duets with their famous fathers.

Nonoy will still sing with "Star for a Night" winner Sarah Geronino. "Because my kids are still young," he said.

They may not be as young as today's crop of entertainers, but Rico, Hajji, Rey, Nonoy and Marco sure feel rejuvenated. Aside from preparing for their Greatest Hits shows, they are busy as solo performers.

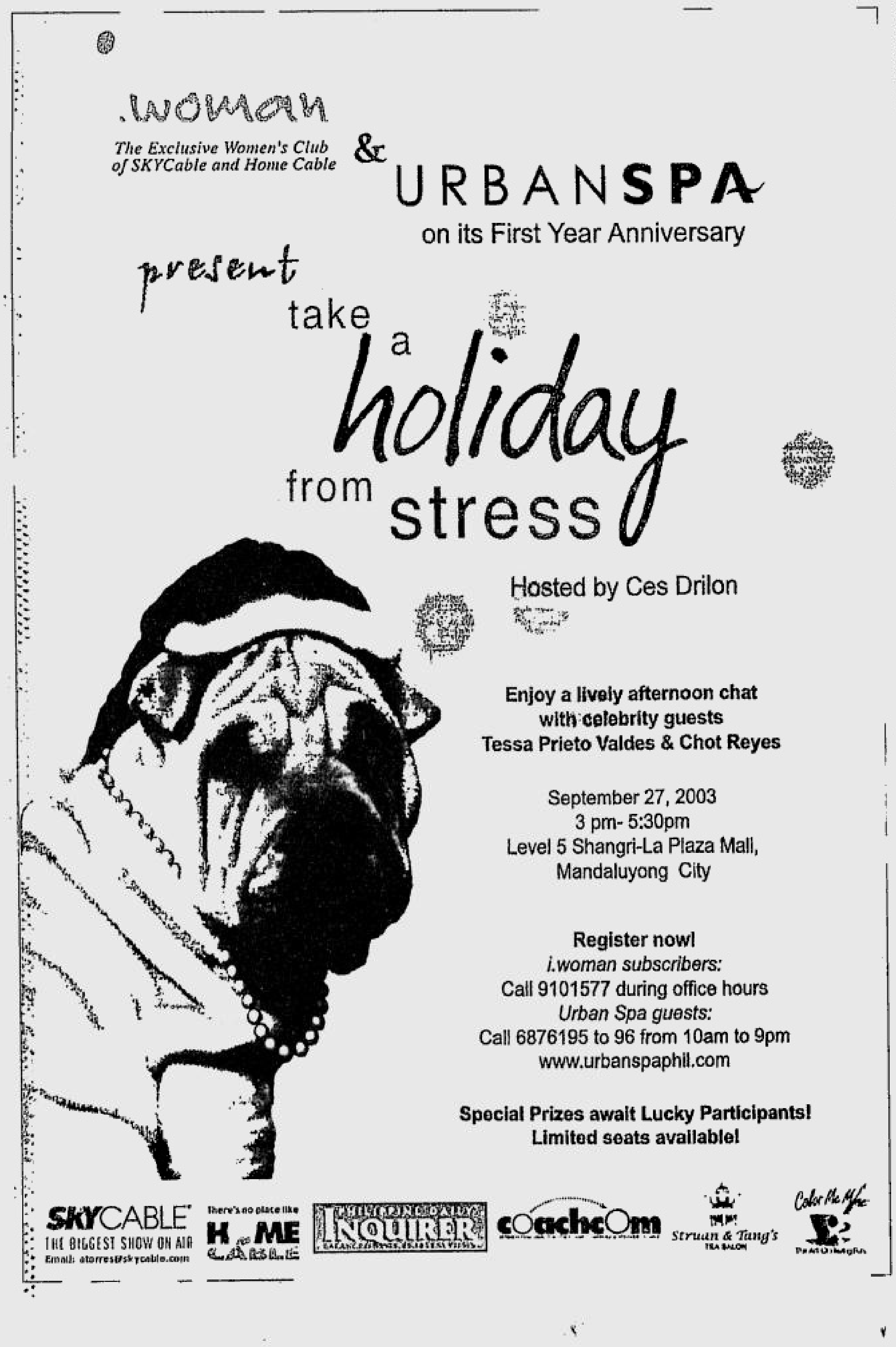
Marco has completed an audio CD for Universal Records called "Marco for All Season," as well as a visual recording (on VCD and DVD) of old and new OPM hits titled "Videoke King."

Nonoy has signed a contract with Viva Records, which will release his new CD soon.

Hajji has lately been composing songs for his planned album that will also feature compositions by younger singer-composers like Dingdong Avanzado.

Rey is collaborating with his kids to produce an album.

Of course, Rico won't be left behind. He'll be working on his own record. For what label? Turning to Marco, he askd, "*Ano nga ang* recording company *mo*?" And then he announced with a laugh, "*Yun din!*"



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RP's foreign debt load rises to $56.1B

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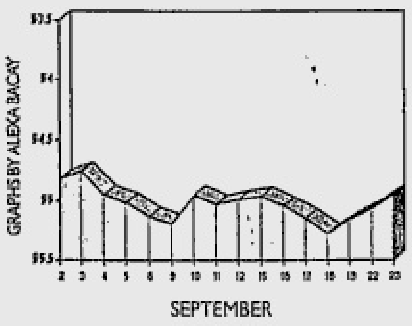

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

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As of 5 p.m., Sept. 22, 2003

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STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower on technical correction

SHARES ended weaker on Tuesday, with leading property stocks and large cap phone firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) hit by profit taking, traders said.

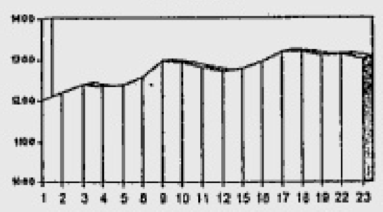
Investors have been cautious of pushing the main index higher in the absence of fresh leads.

"I believe we are seeing ongoing profit taking. I guess this is expected with most traders expecting a correction after the big gains early last week and with no big positive fundamentals for now," said Emmanuel Soler, a broker at Equitiworld Securities.

Reuters

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

SEPTEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES' foreign debt rose to $56.1 billion at the end of June due largely to foreign exchange revaluation adjustments, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas announced yesterday.

This was an increase of 0.6 percent from the $55.8-billion foreign debt as of end-March 2003, the bank said in a statement. A year ago, the debt level was $54.9 billion.

It said that medium to long-term accounts, or those with maturities of more than a year, accounted for 88.9 percent of the debt.

The growing external debt was seen to add more pressure to the country's burgeoning public debt, which stood at P5.16 trillion as of end-2002. Of the consolidated sovereign debt stock as of December last year, $45.2 billion were in foreign currencies, according to the Department of Finance.

Foreign debts monitored by the central bank are the combined borrowings of the government and private companies that have to secure the BSP's approval for any offshore borrowing.

Criticized for its huge debt burden, the country has been forced to earmark roughly 40 percent of its annual budget to service debts, leaving little room for infrastructure and social services.

Even the International Monetary Fund has expressed alarm at the increasing level of public debt in emerging economies like the Philippines.

In the IMF's World Economic Outlook, the Fund said that at current trends, the level of public debt in most Asian and Latin American countries was far from being sustainable given that based on its calculations, "the sustainable public debt level for a typical emerging market economy may only be 25 percent of GDP, compared to 75 percent of GDP for a typical industrial country."

Through the years, the country's foreign debt stock had been increasing, the increments larger a year after the 1997 Asian financial crisis struck. The external debt stock stood at about $25 billion during the debt crisis years of the early 80's and steadily grew to $41.87 billion in 1996.

By 1997, the foreign debt burden reached $45.43 billion, growing to $47.82 billion in 1998. A year later, it exceeded the $50-billion mark and stood at $52.21 billion.

Ex-Urbank prexy pushes case vs BSP, PDIC heads

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE FORMER president of the defunct Urban Bank Inc. has accused Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura and former Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. president Norberto Nazareno before the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals of allowing preferential withdrawals from bank while it was under PDIC receivership.

In a petition for certiorari filed with the courts on Monday, former bank president Teodoro Borlongan alleged that on top of a P562.5-million preferential withdrawal made by the state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines, the BSP itself withdrew P89 million by offsetting UBI's treasury notes against its interbank loan with the central monetary institution.

A petition for certiorari is a special civil action to review a decision, order or regulation against an official for grave abuse of discretion. Borlongan's petition likewise charged the Ombudsman of acting in "grave and whimsical abuse of discretion" in dismissing his original complaint.

In his petitions, Borlongan asked the courts to nullify the Ombudsman's orders dismissing his charges that Buenaventura and Nazareno had transferred assets out of UBI to their preferred creditors at the time the bank was placed under PDIC receivership and its assets under legal custody.

Borlongan originally filed his complaint on June 26, 2001, before the Ombudsman, which split it into two—the criminal case and the administrative case.

In the administrative case, the Ombudsman's finding was that: "The alleged sale of P562.50-million NFA (National Food Authori-

EX-URBANK/ B2

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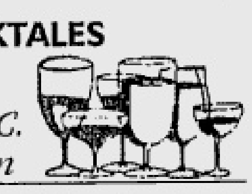

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IN yet another blow to the dying textile industry, industry leader Solid Mills is set to shut down its prime Sucat factory by the end of the month.

The closure of Solid leaves only the Gokongwei-controlled Litton Mills as the only major player left in what used to be the country's dominant industry in the '70s and '80s.

Solid Mills did not return phone calls, but apparently the company has already informed its major clients about its impending shutdown.

Established in 1971 as a pure denim weaver, Solid Mills has counted Levi's, Guess, Wrangler, Lee, Company B, Jag, Hanes and Paddocks among its major buyers.

Levi's country manager Minette Elicaño said Levi's would now have only Litton Mills as its remaining local source, in addition to American and Japanese textile suppliers. The privately held Solid Mills, as well as Litton Mills, has been sapped by two years of continuing losses, according to the grapevine.

Solid Mills owns a building in Legaspi Village, as well as a 12-hectare factory compound in Sucat.

The Sucat property alone is worth billions of pesos, and, like many hollowed-out '60s and '70s era factory sites along the South Superhighway, is a prime candidate for a housing/retail redevelopment.

Solid Mills had as many as 3,000 workers in the early '80s. As late as the second quarter this year, the company was banking on an export strategy crafted by its three gung-ho marketing men, David Wuson (SVP marketing), Harvey Ang (export director), and Jun Mission (VP marketing), to turn the company around.

While local textile makers have been virtually decimated by the Chinese competition, the country's denim pants manufacturers like Levi's have so far managed to stay afloat.

To keep up with rapid changes in market and fashion tastes, Levi's has to work hand-in-hand with textile manufacturers like Litton for fabric development, said Elicaño. As well, Levi's also has to be in constant touch with local laundries for the desired garment wash and finishing, especially as the US jeans maker tries to correctly predict or ride the crest of the fickle youth fashion design.

Opening doors

- SHOPWISE plans to use the P650 million in convertible notes it issued to the AIG Asian Opportunity Fund to finance the opening of the Araneta Center store and probably two more supermarkets in Metro Manila by next year.
- FLUSH with natural gas windfall, Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes will inaugurate this afternoon a new satellite office for the island-province in King's Court building along Makati's Chino Roces Avenue.

Heard through the grapevine

FOLLOWING Conchita Manabat's declining her appointment as BayanTel receiver because of possible conflict-of-interest question, the next receiver of the debt-hobbled Lopez telecom concern will likely be Remigio Noval, a partner at the Laya Mananghaya & Co. audit firm.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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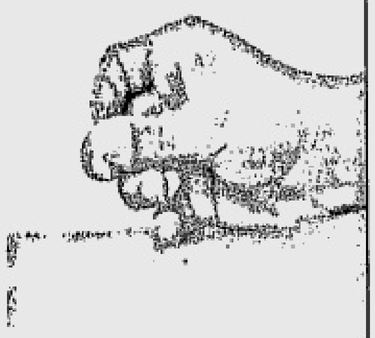

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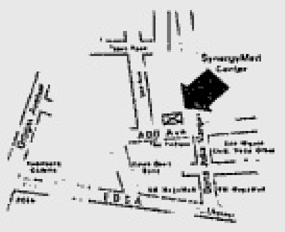

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SMC studies transfer of 5% stake to gov't

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. is studying the transfer to the government of treasury-held shares equivalent to 5 percent of its total stock as mandated by an earlier Supreme Court ruling.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SMC said it had received a letter dated Sept. 19 from the Presidential Commission on Good Government seeking custody of some 25.45 million shares which had not been included in the writ of sequestration of 1986.

"Our lawyers are studying the matter and we will make disclosures as we are so advised," the disclosure said.

The PCGG admitted that it has failed to implement the court ruling in the past due to certain "complex circumstances."

The shares were declared by the high court as part of the alleged ill-gotten wealth of former President Ferdinand Marcos and his cronies.

An analyst estimated the additional 5-percent stake to be worth P5 billion based on the last block sale arising from the buy-in of retail tycoon Henry Sy in SMC equivalent to a board seat. As of yesterday, SMC "B" shares closed at P63.

The turnover of the additional stake is seen to help the government generate a better foothold in SMC as this could translate to additional voting powers during the next stockholders' meeting.

Tanduay defends gin product name

IN LAUNCHING Ginebra Kapitan, Tanduay Distilleries Inc. is actually working to promote and protect the interests of the consuming public, specifically the gin consumers, said Tanduay's legal counsel Eduardo C. Escano of the Escano and Partners Law Offices.

Escano said the gin market was a fully competitive market and that consumers were entitled to excellent quality products sold at fair prices. It appeared that the only competition present in this case was a fair competition between two giants in the industry, and the higher principle therefore was the freedom of choice by the consumers and the market should uphold that, he said.

Escano said that a generic term could not be considered as the dominant portion of any trademark. "All manufacturers and distributors of any product can actually refer to their product using a generic term. It is Tanduay's position that the word "ginebra" is not associated with Ginebra San Miguel Inc., but referred to the product itself. Giving any player in any industry the exclusive rights to the generic name of a product would be tantamount to sanctioning a monopoly in the market."

INTEREST RATES

Sept. 23, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 23-Sep-03	MART1 22-Sep-03
1 Month	6.2789	6.3077
3 Months	6.3115	6.3036
6 Months	7.0625	7.1268
1 Year	8.1411	8.1423
2 Years	9.2875	9.3911
3 Years	9.8125	9.9179
4 Years	10.3292	10.3786
5 Years	10.6554	10.6857
7 Years	11.3607	11.3643
10 Years	11.6446	11.6375
20 Years	12.0196	12.025
25 Years	12.2804	12.2769

SOURCE : MART/BLOOMBERG

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Sept. 23, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4.2	4	4	35,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.5	30,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43	43.5	42.5	43	109,400
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	34	34.5	34	34.5	305,000
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	29.5	30	29	29.5	283,000
Philippine National Bank	25	25.5	25	25.5	52,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	1,200
Security Bank Corp.	19	19	19	19	56,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	29	28.5	29	85,600
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	5,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	118	180	118	180	280
Manulife Financial Corp.	1700	1700	1700	1700	10
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	100,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1220	1220	1210	1210	500
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Abs-Cbn Broadcasting Corp.	24.75	24.75	24.5	24.75	17,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.73	0.71	0.72	6,050,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	670	675	670	670	1,020
Ipeople Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	100,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.049	0.047	0.049	3,500,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.049	2,900,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.74	0.77	0.73	0.74	39,310,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	650	650	645	645	20,400
Ivantage Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	3,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	16	554,200
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24.5	24	24.25	945,800
Petron Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.04	1,600,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1,067,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.8	429,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	620,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.46	60,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	260,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	140,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	25,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31.5	31	31.5	213,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18	18	18	18	37,100
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	20,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	54	54.5	37,200
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	63	62	63	99,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	110,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	110,000
Ayala Corp.	4.95	4.95	4.85	4.85	2,979,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.16	300,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	7,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	2,600,000
APC Group Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.06	0.06	400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	9,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.61	0.65	0.61	0.64	26,150,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.29	2,450,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.5	18.75	18.25	18.5	401,200
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.105	0.105	270,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	160,000
Ionics Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.68	1.68	1,509,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2.1	2	2.1	1,227,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.95	0.97	0.95	0.95	850,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.34	43,740,000
Music Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	4,300,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	400,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1,030,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	250,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	910,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3	3	3	3	3,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	28,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,700,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	2,200
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.54	0.55	0.54	0.55	1,820,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.43	0.46	0.43	0.46	160,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	960,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24.5	24.5	24.25	24.25	140,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	6,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,300
Philweb Corp - Warrants	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	4,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.3	6.4	5,469,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	380,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	60,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	140,000
Empire East Land Inc	0.245	0.245	0.24	0.245	2,760,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.04	1.04	3,568,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	1,650,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	100,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	100,000
Primex Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2	2	2	6,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	1,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.2	18,142,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	3,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1	1	1	1	140,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	19,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	1,000,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	4,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	8,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	50,000
Pacifica	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	2,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	200,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.15	300,000

Ex-Urbank prexy . . .

From page B1

ty) notes to Land Bank of the Philippines and charging the same against the latter's interbank loans to UBI was done at the time when the latter was already closed on April 26, 2000."

The Ombudsman further added that the anomalous transaction had reduced LBP's loan exposure to UBI from P1.05 billion to about P488.5 million after interest and that Nazareno had "directly committed a serious breach of the important obligation of the PDIC acting as a receiver, to secure and consolidate the assets of the bank."

Despite the Ombudsman's serious findings, Borlongan lamented that Nazareno was meted out with a mere penalty of one-month-and-one-day suspension while Buenaventura was exonerated. In the criminal case, the complaint was altogether dismissed.

On July 14, 2003, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo affirmed with finality the dismissal of the cases and further exonerated Nazareno from any administrative liability.

CURRENCIES

September 23, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.871536	1.000000	55.038000
Japan	Yen	0.007774	0.008920	0.490900
United Kingdom	Pound	1.438121	1.650100	90.818200
Hongkong	Dollar	0.111946	0.128447	7.069500
Switzerland	Franc	0.644246	0.739208	40.684500
Canada	Dollar	0.647164	0.742556	40.868800
Singapore	Dollar	0.505296	0.579777	31.909800
Australia	Dollar	0.592559	0.679902	37.420400
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.311889	2.652661	145.997200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.232404	0.266660	14.676400
Brunei	Dollar	0.503836	0.578102	31.817600
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021761	0.024969	1.374200
UAE	Dirham	0.237301	0.272279	14.985700
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.147400	63.150600
Argentina	Peso	0.299497	0.343643	18.913400
Brazil	Real	0.300530	0.344928	18.978600
Denmark	Kroner	0.134671	0.154521	8.504500
India	Rupee	0.019062	0.021872	1.203800
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.229382	0.263193	14.485600
Mexico	New Peso	0.080975	0.092911	5.113600
New Zealand	Dollar	0.519793	0.596410	32.825200
Norway	Kroner	0.122386	0.140426	7.728800
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015105	0.017331	0.953900
South Africa	Rand	0.121047	0.138889	7.644200
Korea	Won	0.000757	0.000869	0.047800
Sweden	Kroner	0.110786	0.127116	6.996200
Syria	Pound	0.020751	0.023810	1.310500
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025854	0.029665	1.632700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000546	0.000627	0.034500

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Mr. HOWARD D. BELTON, *Chair and CEO, Unilever Philippines, Inc.*
Mr. AHMED CHAMI, *Chair, Microsoft Asia Pacific*
Mr. JONATHAN A. GURANGO, *CEO, Webworks OS, Inc.*
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Yield of 2-yr gov't bonds up slightly

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT'S cash position has dropped to only P30 billion as of this week, down from about P40 billion a month ago, prompting the Bureau of Treasury to accept slightly higher bids for the two-year bonds sold yesterday.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the government's lower cash position was not the reason why the government allowed the two-year rate to go up mildly.

"Our cash position remained strong. The efficient level of cash position is actually only P20 billion. We accepted the (higher) rates because the increase was reasonable," he said.

The yield of the two-year bonds rose to 8.73 percent, up 45.5 basis points from 8.415 percent on July 29 when the government last sold a similar paper. The Treasury was swamped with P13.45 billion worth of bids but accepted only P3 billion.

Edeza said the pressure on local interest rates, largely due to political uncertainties, has eased. He said the rates would be flat when the government sells treasury bills next week.

"The market liquidity has returned as banks have adjusted to the effective hike in the central bank's rate. We should not see an increase in the rates next week," he said.

The financial market started asking for higher returns on their investments in government securities after the failed July 27 mutiny.

Investors blamed the continued weakness of the peso and unending political controversies for the higher bids on treasury bills and bonds that had resulted to several rejections since late July.

When the Bangko Sentral scrapped the tiering scheme on overnight rates to encourage banks to park their funds rather than to speculate on the peso, lenders started placing their money back to the BSP's vaults.

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DHL INAUGURATES NEW PHILIPPINE GATEWAY FACILITY

[Manila, Philippines, September 24, 2003]– DHL, the world's leading express and logistics solutions provider, today marked the enhancement of its Philippine network with the inauguration of its newly refurbished domestic hub in the NAIA Complex to support the increased trading requirements of the Philippines.

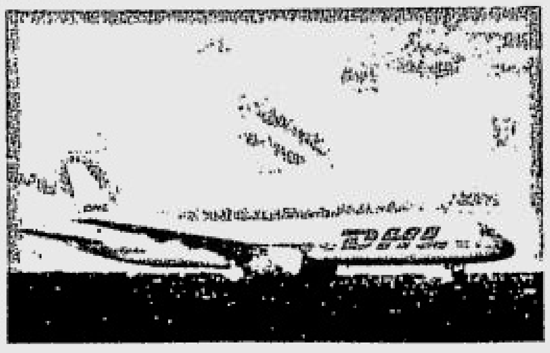
The new facility, also called a Gateway, is in line with DHL's commitment to foster an environment conducive to the healthier flow of trade in the Philippines. Centralizing the Import and Export Operations for DHL Philippines, the DHL Gateway is the main exit and entry point for all shipments in the Philippines, which includes a Customs clearance facility that enable faster clearance of inbound international shipments.

"The DHL Gateway is an important component in our global network and plays a critical role in our standard operations and day-to-day business agenda – to serve our customers better and more efficiently." said Charles Brewer, DHL Express Philippines Country Manager. "As the country's partner in facilitating trade, the DHL Gateway signifies DHL's commitment to provide customized and innovative air express and logistics solutions to our Filipino customers, as we strive to establish facilities that will significantly enhance our reliability, efficiency and ability to offer world-class, quality service."

The new DHL Gateway is expected to positively impact DHL's goal of increasing the global competitive advantage of its Filipino customers by improving the movement of goods to and from the Philippines. To achieve this, DHL has deployed rapidscan x-ray machines and high-end scanners to screen, measure, identify and document packages and state-of-the art information and technology systems that automate air cargo, bond inventory and air waybill imaging.

And because the gateway houses Bureau of Customs personnel, customs clearance procedures are carried out as soon as the packages arrive. With clearance processing times beginning as earl as 4:00 in the morning, transit times are therefore cut by as much as one day, there by increasing the global competitiveness of DHL's Filipino customers.

"Coupled with the high-end technology available at the DHL Gateway, which enables us to constantly communicate with our regional and international network, the presence of the Bureau of Customs in the Gateway marks one of our strategies to make our operations more efficient and reliable," said Nigel Lockett, DHL Philippines National Gateway Manager. "DHL strongly believes in the strict compliance with customs clearance procedures and trade regulations and we are thankful for the strong support of the Bureau of Customs, whose valued cooperation further boosts DHL's capability to deliver shipments faster to our customers."



The new DHL Gateway is currently equipped with the highest level of security systems such as intrusion alarms, door access control systems and vans with Global Positioning System (GPS). The Gateway operates 24 hours daily and currently employs close to 200 people.

DHL is the world's leading express and logistics company offering customers innovative and customised solutions from a single source. With global expertise in solutions, express, air and ocean freight and overland transport DHL combines world-wide coverage with an in depth understanding of local markets. DHL's harmonised international network links more than 220 countries and territories world-wide. DHL continues to be at the forefront of technology and, with more than 170,000 dedicated employees, guarantees fast and reliable services aimed at exceeding customers' expectations. Based in Brussels, Belgium, DHL is 100% owned by Deutsche Post World Net.

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PEOPLE at WORK

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Destiny made her a teacher for women

By Cecile Garcia

OFTEN the choices we make at some point in our lives determine our destiny. But, for Aurora Javate-De Dios, it was the choices she could not make that sealed her fate, bringing her where she is today.

De Dios is dean of the College of Liberal Arts of Miriam College and a professor at the MA level of International Studies and Women's Studies. She has been teaching for 27 years. She says. "Teaching is a part of me. If I were to stop teaching for a day, I believe I would die."

Yet, she did not always want to be a teacher. At one time, De Dios dreamed of becoming a diplomat. She recalls that she wanted to take up foreign service and to specialize in French. But Martial Law intervened.

Former activist

As a student leader at the University of the Philippines, De Dios was thoroughly opposed to martial rule. She became an activist, thus putting aside her dreams of becoming a diplomat. Looking back, she says, "I could not have defeated a government I did not believe in."

When Martial Law ended and after being detained briefly (she was released in 1977) De Dios realized it was too late to pursue a foreign service career. "But, teaching turned out to be a very fulfilling second choice," she concedes. "It allows me the freedom and the latitude to be myself and to develop my own ideas. Preparing my students to be good diplomats fulfills me as well." De Dios, incidentally, obtained her Master's Degree in Asian Studies at UP and was the recipient of the 1979 Asian Studies Scholarship Award.

De Dios started her academic career as a teacher at Miriam, moving on to department head and finally becoming dean, the CEO of the college. Her job mainly is to keep the house in order, to give the college direction, to help steer it toward academic excellence and also to develop academic programs. The college, De Dios points out, provides a nurturing environment, allowing her to express her political convictions and to stand by them.

As an expert in Asian Studies, De Dios takes a special interest in Philippine-Japan relations. This interest, she discloses, stems from her fascination with certain events that took place during the Japanese occupation and from tales of the era told to her by her grandmother. The same interest prompted her to do a thesis on Japanese Assistance to the Philippines for her master's. Recently, she finished her doctor's thesis on "Glamor, Glitter and Yen," which explores the growing phenomenon of Filipina entertainers in Japan.

Women's issues

Sometime in the '80s, De Dios developed an interest in gender issues, particularly women's rights. She recounts, "As women activists, we realized we could not dissociate personal concerns from those of the country. Both were valid. We decided to form a group we called Kalayaan. Unlike larger groups we had worked with, Kalayaan had a gender perspective. It was more focused. We used to gather once a month to discuss issues."

In 1987, De Dios and a group of college teachers like herself founded the Women's Studies Association of the Philippines. She became its first president. Their goal, according to De Dios, was to train teachers to be more gender-sensitive and for them to introduce a gender perspective in their classes. She adds, "We wanted to initiate curricular changes in order to balance education which we felt had to reflect reality." They succeeded to a certain degree.

CAREER TALES

As a staunch advocate of women's rights, De Dios has authored books and monographs on violence against women, migration and trafficking. She established the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women in Asia-Pacific and heads its secretariat in the area. She also serves as its president. The group helps governments in dealing with the problem by introducing laws and policies to prevent it, and also through intervention.

NCRFW chair

Presently, De Dios is chairperson of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW). She served as a commissioner before being appointed by President Arroyo in 2001. Her term ends next year.

The Commission, explains De Dios, is a policy advisory body. It is a coordination agency, which works with other major agencies to formulate policies more attuned to the needs of women. "We have a program to implement a framework for women covering human rights, economic empowerment and good governance. We believe the government should have a planning program inclusive of women and sensitive to their needs. Part of our job in the commission is to prompt the government to introduce laws to make life better for women. My job is to give overall direction and substantive inputs to the commission." Her work is pro bono.

Are Filipino women better off today? "Yes and no," replies De Dios. "While there's formal equality as embodied in the constitution and in our laws, it's up to society to provide assistance and to install safeguards to protect the rights of women. We're fortunate, though, because Philippine society is far more open, accepting and nurturing of women."

De Dios does not believe there is a model for a woman's role, maintaining that a woman must do whatever fulfills her as long as it can be of service to others as well.

Service

Service has been the hallmark of De Dios' distinctive career. She considers serving as the Philippine expert to the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women from 1994 to 1998 one of its high points. According to her, the committee sets the benchmark for women's rights. She says, "It was a very prestigious body made up of lawyers, teachers, diplomats and economists. My advantage was that I came from a mass movement. It was a wonderful learning experience." Despite their cultural differences, De Dios found out that they shared the same views and sentiments on the rights of women.

Describing herself as a "multi-tasking sort of person," De Dios sees no boundaries between her academic work and her advocacy. She avers, "I'm never happy doing just one thing. There's so much that can be done. Teaching is not the end of academic work. Academic work includes doing other things that can enhance it." Involvement in her advocacy, she adds, is enriching. "There's always something I can gain or derive from it which I can use in my teaching. It works both ways. One feeds into the other."

Her commitment to gender issues and to the concerns of women is in itself her most significant contribution to the cause. She affirms, "I do my part by being an advocate of gender and equality in every aspect, and by being an advocate of the rights of women. I do this as a matter of course, as dean and as a teacher." De Dios, admittedly a feminist, sees the term as positive. A feminist, she says, is simply somebody who realizes her rights and is not afraid to assert them.

De Dios' other passion is her family. She is married to Angelito De Dios, a businessman. They have two daughters and a son.

She has this to say to every woman: "Don't give up your individuality. Pursue whatever you're passionate about. Don't let relationships or marriage stunt you. If a relationship won't allow you to develop or bloom fully, there must be something wrong with it. Being poor should not be a hindrance."

AURORA Javate-De Dios

PHOTO BY AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Desk jobs can be disabling

By Manolita A. Gonzales

"SO this is what I get for spending hours hunched over a computer," I thought on my 10th session with the traction machine. The machine, set at 10 kilos, pulled my head up every eight seconds, held it up for 8 counts, and then released it. This gentle up and down motion would last for 20 minutes to decompress the cervical spine (neck area).

I itched somewhere but couldn't scratch. My hands were swathed in paraffin, wax paper and thick towels. That was for my carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS). My shoulders were draped with a hot compress. That was for my taut muscles. Afterwards, I would be doing the neck stretches with the physical therapist and the ultrasound on the neck, shoulders and wrists to reach deep down into those frayed muscles and nerves.

Carpal tunnel syndrome

CTS is a condition where the nerves passing through the wrists and fingers are pinched from repetitive flexing when you type or do any work using the same hand motions. Symptoms range from numbed fingertips to pain in the wrists, shoulders and arms.

Other employees disabled by their desk jobs also underwent these rehab sessions at the same hospital. I considered them my fellow members of what I call the DDJ club (Disabled by Desk Job). Terry, a marketing manager of a big firm, suspects she got CTS after writing email more than 13 hours a day for the last three years. "If therapy fails," she said, "I will need an operation."

Other DDJs were a lady dentist, an engineer and two senior citizens—a former dressmaker and a retired accountant—who have to contend with CTS even after retirement.

More cases

With a number of us undergoing treatment, I asked my doctor, is the tribe of DDJs increasing?

Yes, according to Dr. Vania Yu, head of St. Luke Medical Center's Physical Rehabilitation Division. The Philippines does not have a national epidemiological study on work-related ailments but she estimates that 50 percent of rehab patients at St. Luke's and other general rehab hospitals come for musculo-skeletal conditions like neck pains and low back pains, tendinitis and CTS. The other 50 percent are patients who suffered a stroke, spinal cord injury, fractures, etc.

Dr. Yu describes other common work-related ailments other than CTS.

If the joints of your fingers ache, especially when you open your hands, you may have tendinitis. Tendinitis is an inflammation of a tendon (litid), the end part of the muscle connected to the bone. "The tendon contracts with the muscle," Dr. Yu explains. "When the contraction is excessive, the tendon is overstretched and becomes inflamed."

One common form of tendinitis is trigger finger or flexor tenosynovitis, which afflicts people who type or work with their hands. De Quervain's tendinitis affects only the thumb. Take note: You can get it from excessive texting.

"Tendinitis can become chronic if the inflammation goes untreated," Dr. Yu warns. "The tendons become stiff and you may end up with disabled hand functions."

Other ailments

If you lift heavy things, you are prone to low back pain. Neck pain and upper back pain are more common among those who are seated all day with their heads bent, like those who write, do clerical or computer work. "If you sit and work for long periods of time, with almost no breaks, you may develop degenerative changes," Dr. Yu says. "You can also end up with deconditioning, a general term for a condition where the muscles and body generally waste if you don't exercise enough."

If any part of your body is hit directly by cold air from the air conditioner, seek cover. "Prolonged exposure to cold air slows down impulse flow in the nerve, increases muscle spasm and causes stiff muscles in any part of the body," Dr. Yu explains. "When it's too cold, the lubricant in the joints (synovial fluid) becomes gel-like so the joints stiffen. Over a long period, your joints can lose their flexibility. If cold air hits your face, it can become numb and you can develop Bell's Palsy. Some say the cause of Bell's Palsy is viral, but the factor of cold air has not been totally ruled out."

Effects of stress

Are your shoulder muscles always stiff? It may be myofascial pain syndrome (MPS). "It's a stress related condition that can be emotional, psychological, physical or mental in origin," says Dr. Yu. "I had a patient with very mild cervical disc herniation yet was in severe pain. She also had myofascial pain syndrome. She was the typical executive at the peak of her career but getting all these aches and pains. She came for treatment regularly and felt fine after each session, but she'd be back a week later because of the stress of office work. I finally told her to resign. She did, migrated to the States and (now) she's fine."

For those of us who can't line up for a visa or retire, maybe staying off computers is best. But, Dr. Yu admonishes, "It's not the computer but the way you use the computer or your posture that can cause a problem. Since most of our work these days are done seated, it's the smaller parts of the body that are more affected. People think these conditions are just because of overwork, stress, fatigue or aging but these are not," said Dr. Yu. "

CTS, MPS, back pains and tendinitis are not life threatening but can be disabling. "I had a patient who could not even get up from bed in the morning," said Dr. Yu. "That's the worst that can happen."

Then I'm lucky. I can forgo once a month therapy provided I do daily neck and wrist exercises at home. I can still go on long mountain treks in line with the job or join aerobics classes but hey, no more jumping and skipping—for life. *(Next issue: Prevention and treatment)*

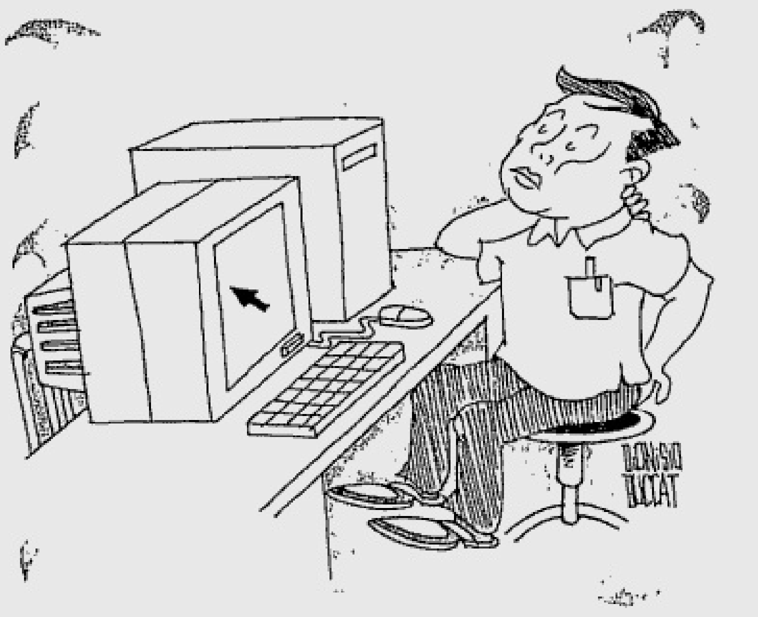


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

How to tell the boss you're pregnant

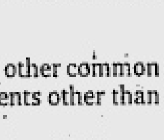
GOT this plea through email: "I have just found a new job. I am starting out as a sales trainee and my boss promised that after six months, I could move up to being an account manager. But I just found out today that I am pregnant. What should I do? I'm not even one month into my training. I'm afraid that if I tell my boss about my situation the chances of my moving up will be affected."

Breaking this kind of news to your boss can certainly put your standing as a trainee at risk. It could cast an unfair shadow on the way your boss will evaluate your output. He may pre-judge your performance and decide that it is best for him to invest valuable training time on someone who will not take a maternity leave soon after the training period is completed. But this should not be the end of the road. When, how, and what exactly you will tell your boss could, in fact, improve your chances of keeping your job. I asked career coach and organizational development specialist Lino Rivera (president of Change Consultants, Inc.) to help our expectant working mom.

How to break the news

"Timing is very important," says Rivera. Gauge the state of mind of your boss before taking up the matter. If this is a bad time for the company—pressure could be high, multi-tasking could be on full-throttle—try to hold off your news until things are at a calmer state. Your boss will be able to listen better if there are not too many fires he must put out.

WORKING MOM



An Mercado Alcantara

Use timing to your advantage. By holding off telling your boss about your pregnancy, you will be able to do work as usual. Use this time to prove your worth. If they can see that you are committed to your work and that you can bring tremendous value to the team, your boss will consider you indispensable and bend backward for you to accommodate your needs.

Don't present it as a problem. Never complain about the timing of your pregnancy. You don't want to give your boss the impression that you feel out of control (even if you do). Instead, come to your boss with a written action plan. He will appreciate it if you present him with solutions: concrete steps on how the company can handle your absence. Rivera says: "Your boss' primary concern would be on the effect of your situation on the organization. The bottom line is he would not want work to be disrupted." You will have to assure him that you will take an active part in making sure that work does continue and targets will be met.

Don't bite off more than you can chew. You might be so eager to prove your worth to your boss that you will promise to keep up with your regular responsibilities even while on maternity leave. Avoid making promises you might not be able to meet. This will make your credibility suffer and will drag down your next career move.

Be straightforward

Keep your talk short and straightforward. In the Filipino corporation, says Rivera, some bosses may be nurturing enough for you to want to share your thoughts and feelings about your pregnancy with them. Do this only if your boss is also a friend to you. Otherwise, spare him the details and go straight into your plans on how you will help in the transition period.

Be proactive. Show an eagerness to learn new things and to try new things. Look for ways to show your boss that you are taking the training seriously. Convince him that you aim to use all that has been taught to you when you come back from your maternity leave.

The way you manage the news and the way you handle the transition may prove to be the best way to prove to your boss that even as a new mom you will be ready to face the challenges of the job.

Write to me about your working mom concerns at an_alcantara@abs.pinoycentral.com.

(An Mercado-Alcantara is founding editor of Metro Working Mom published by ABS-CBN Publishing. For more tips, buy this month's issue with Aiko Melendez on the cover.)

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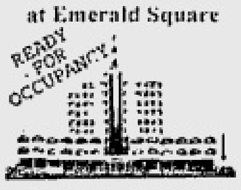

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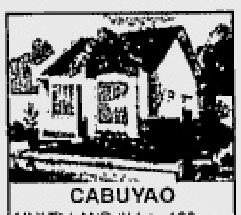

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6.	L.G. MATHIESON DEV. CORP TCT-(S-5266) 93649 LOT B-1 SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY, BGY. MARCELO	10.000	LAND IND. 1981-2003	E006-02882	2,248,950 00	1,548,774.00	3,797,724.00
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18	METROWORLD PROPERTIES & HOLDINGS CORPORATION TCT NO 93878 LOT 2 MULTINATIONAL VILLAGE, BGY MOONWALK	998	RES LOT 1996-2003	E008-08302	34,331.20	21,844.30	56 175.50
19	ARIES HOLDINGS INC 30TH FLR PENTHOUSE CCT NO 7641 GOLDEN BAY COND. CLEVELAND TOWER MARINA, BGY DON GALO	615.06	CONDO PENTHOUSE 1998-2003	E004-02715	386,996.50	202,645 44	589,641.94
20	ALFREDO C APO TCT NO (220651) 209132, LOT 2-B SOUTH SUPER HIGHWAY BGY MARCELO	451	IND LAND 1993-2003	E006-01209	165,066 00	101,596.77	266,662.77
21	ALEXANDER & LEE REALTY CORP TCT NO 68406 LOT 5 LAKE LANAO ST BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	167	RES LAND 1999-2003	E012-02679	3,006.00	1,723.44	4,729.44
22	ALEXANDER & LEE REALTY CORP FIRST FLOOR SECOND FLOOR PORCH LANAI CARPORT TERRACE FENCE LOT 5 LAKE LANAO ST BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	49 6 57 50 2 25 7 13 30 22 40 38 40	HOUSE 1997-2000	E012-02680	52,758 16	32,628.96	85,387.12
23	ALEXANDER & LEE REALTY CORP TCT NO 68408 LOT 7 LAKE LANAO ST., BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	149	RES LAND 1997-2003	E012-02681	3,874.00	2,395.92	6,269.92
24	ALEXANDER & LEE REALTY CORP FIRST FLOOR SECOND FLOOR PORCH LANAI CARPORT TERRACE FENCE LOT 7 LAKE LANAO ST. BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	49 80 57 50 2.25 7 13 30 22 40 38 38	HOUSE 1999-2003	E012-02682	36,107.28	20,701.58	56,808 86
25	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16306, LOT 1 BLK 6, MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	787	RES. LAND 1997-2003	E012-01936	20,722 00	12,815.76	33,537.76
26	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16313 LOT 2 BLK 2 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	136	RES LAND 1997-2003	E012-02210	3,536 00	2,186 88	5,722 88
27	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16314 LOT 1 BLK 2 CORNER LOT 1 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	10	RES LAND 1997-2003	E012-02211	286 00	176 88	462.88
28	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16307, LOT 1 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	2 280	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02212	29,640 00	18,331.20	47,971.20
29	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16308 LOT 2 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	1 378	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02213	17,914.00	11,079.12	28,993.12
30	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16311, LOT 3 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	351	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02214	4,563.00	2,822.12	7,385.12
31	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16309, LOT 4 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	294	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02215	3,822.00	2,363.76	6,185.76
32	MAKATI SOUTH HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION TCT NO 16310 LOT 5 MAKATI SOUTH HILLS BGY SAN MARTIN DE PORRES	345	ROAD LOT 1997-2003	E012-02216	4,485 00	2,773.88	7,258 88
33	OCTAVIO YU GUEVARRA TCT-86731 LOT 13 BLK. 1 BETTER LIVING SUBD BARANGAY DON BOSCO	285	RES LOT 1979-2003	E003-02060	17,900 40	19,153 26	37,053.66
34	DANILO G ARENAS TCT-29268 LOT 4 BLK 7 EQUITY HOMES BARANGAY MARCELO	150	RES LOT 1996-2003	E006-04793	3,720 00	2,296 80	6,016.80
35	DANILO G ARENAS HOUSE PATIO LANAI ATTIC CARPORT FENCE LOT 4 BLK 7 EQUITY HOMES, BARANGAY MARCELO	51 4 5 6 9.6 8.8 19 18	RES IMP 1996-2003	E006-04794	19,566 40	12,075.32	31,641.72
36	RODOLFO, FLORDELIZA BACAR TCT-7899, LOT 13 BLK 24 SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBDIVISION BARANGAY MARCELO GREEN	225	RES LOT 2000-2003	E006-04445	3 150.00	1,674.00	4,824 00
37	RODOLFO & FLORDELIZA BACAR TCT - (100213) 78991, LOT 15 BLK 24 SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBDIVISION BARANGAY MARCELO GREEN	426	RES LOT 2000-2003	E006-04446	6,560.40	3,486.42	10,046.82
38	RODOLFO & FLORDELIZA BACAR BUNGALOW LOT 15 SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBD. BARANGAY MARCELO GREEN	218.75	IMPVT 2000-2003	E006-04447	17,750 60	9,433.14	27,183 74
39	RUBEN E ALOMIA TCT 58171 LOT 6 EVERLASTING ST MOV BARANGAY MARCELO	228	RES LOT 1998-2003	E006-00456	5,016.00	3,009 60	8,025 60
40	RUBEN E ALOMIA FIRST FLOOR SECOND FLOOR CARPORT FENCE	63 71.4 10 30	IMPVT 1998-2003	E006-00457	26,075.72	15,645 34	41,721.06
					Grand Total		72,189,920.34

AT ANY TIME BEFORE THE DISTRAINT OF PERSONAL PROPERTY PAYMENT OF THE TAX WITH SURCHARGES INTERESTS AND PENALTIES MAY BE MADE. IN CASE OF FAILURE TO PAY THE BASIC REAL PROPERTY TAX OR ANY OTHER TAX LEVIED UNDER THE REAL PROPERTY TAXATION UPON THE EXPIRATION OF THE PERIODS AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 250 ON PAYMENT OF REAL PROPERTY TAXES IN INSTALLMENTS AS PROVIDED IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, OR WHEN DUE AS THE CASE MAY BE SHALL SUBJECT THE TAXPAYER TO THE PAYMENT OF INTEREST OF THE RATE OF TWO (2%) PERCENT PER MONTH ON THE UNPAID AMOUNT OF A FRACTION THEREOF, UNTIL THE DELINQUENT TAX SHALL HAVE BEEN FULLY PAID PROVIDED HOWEVER, THAT IN NO CASE SHALL THE TOTAL INTEREST ON THE UNPAID TAX OR PORTION THEREOF EXCEED THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHS. FURTHER, AND UNLESS THE TAX, SURCHARGES AND PENALTIES ARE PAID BEFORE THE EXPIRATION OF THE YEAR FOR WHICH THE TAX IS DUE EXCEPT WHEN THE NOTICE OF THE ASSESSMENT OR SPECIAL LEVY IS CONTESTED ADMINISTRATIVELY OR JUDICIALLY PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 3 TITLE II BOOK II OF THE CODE. THE DELINQUENT REAL PROPERTY WILL BE SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION, AND THE TITLE TO THE PROPERTY WILL BE VESTED IN THE PURCHASER. SUBJECT, HOWEVER, TO THE RIGHT OF THE DELINQUENT OWNER OF THE PROPERTY OR ANY PERSON HAVING LEGAL INTEREST THEREIN TO REDEEM THE PROPERTY WITHIN ONE (1) YEAR FROM THE DATE OF SALE.

PERSONAL PROPERTY MAY BE DISTRAINED TO EFFECT PAYMENT, AND/OR LEVY UPON THE REAL PROPERTIES OF THE DELINQUENT TAXPAYER TO SATISFY THE DELINQUENCY.

(Sgd.) LIBERATO M. CARABEO
City Treasurer

(PDI – Sept. 11 & 24, 2003)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

BENJAMIN B. BERNARDINO

This is to inform the public that **BENJAMIN BANAGA BERNARDINO**, whose photo appears above, is no longer connected with **GLOBAL LEARNING MEDIA CORP.** effective 13th September 2003.
Any transaction made through him will not be honored by the company.

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PERSONAL

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us

St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.

Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.

Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, for favor granted.

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS
Miagao, Iloilo
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The University of the Philippines in the Visayas hereby invites all interested bidders to participate in the bidding of the following Laboratory Equipment with a total approved budget of P5.8M

QTY	UNIT	EQUIPMENT
1	unit	Fourier Transform Infrared (FT-IR) Spectrometer
1	unit	Electrolysis System with Platinum Electrode
1	unit	UV-Vis Spectrophotometer
1	unit	Atomic Absorption Spectrometer
1	unit	Distillation Unit

The appropriate registration requirements and Letter of Intent (LOI) should be submitted to UPV-Bids and Awards Secretariat, UPV, Miagao, Iloilo on or before 4:00 p.m. of October 8, 2003. Registered bidders may obtain the pertinent bidding documents from the UPV-BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable amount of 2,000 to the University Cashier.

Schedule of Bidding Activities:

ACTIVITY	DATE/TIME	VENUE
Issuance of Bid Documents	October 6-10, 2003	UPV, Miagao campus
Pre-Bid Conference	October 16, 2003, 1:30 p.m.	Conference Room, New Admin Bldg., UPV, Miagao campus
Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Bids	October 27, 2003, 2:00 p.m.	Conference Room, New Admin Bldg., UPV, Miagao campus

Any changes in the above stated schedule will be duly announced in a Bid Bulletin. The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to the University and/or nullify the bidding without giving any reason. The University further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in connection with the said bidding.

For further information, please contact the UPV-BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos. (033) 338-1535; (033) 315-8137 and (033) 315-8141 during office hours or email us at this address: upv_bacsec@yahoo.com.

DR. GLENN D. AGUILAR
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2003)

BCDA

BASES CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS
ASSET DISPOSITION PROGRAM – PHASE 2

The Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested proponents to participate in Phase 2 of BCDA's Asset Disposition Program (ADB Phase 2). ADP Phase 2 involves the development and privatization of the following BCDA properties:

- Approximately 4 hectares North Bonifacio lots located in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila near the Manila Japanese School, British School and International School Manila; and
- Approximately five (5) hectares located at the former Camp Bago Bantay, Brgy. Sto. Cristo, Bago Bantay, Quezon City between SM City Annex and Mindanao Avenue.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and can purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) for ADP Phase 2 that outlines, among others, the requirements for proponents interested to participate in the privatization.

BCDA is finalizing the metes and bounds of these properties with another government agency. BCDA shall make ready for distribution the TORs for the bidding of the above properties as soon as the metes and bounds are determined. The TORs will be available at a non-refundable cost of Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00) for each TOR at the BCDA office, payable to BCDA in Cash or Manager's Check.

A pre-qualification conference among interested proponents shall be announced. The objective of the pre-qualification conference is to discuss the properties, the TORs and other issues that may be raised by interested proponents.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to Ms. Aileen An R. Zosa or Ms. Bambie L. Andal at telephone numbers 510-0420 or 510-0411 or at arzosa@bcda.gov.ph or blandal@bcda.gov.ph.

(Sgd.) RUFO COLAYCO
President and Chief Executive Officer

(PDI – Sept. 17 & 24, 2003)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PNOC Energy Companies Bldg., Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1201 Makati City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO Tel. No 893-6001/1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified, at least, as Medium A – Electrical Works or Building & Industrial Plant to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING
OF THE NEGROS ORIENTAL RURAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT STAGE VII (9 SITIOS)
EDC03-122

The Approved Budget is P3,172,269 50 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 100 calendar days.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o I.M. Corcuera) starting September 22, 2003 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Two Hundred (P200.00).

Application for Eligibility must be submitted to the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group not later than 5:00 p.m. of October 6, 2003.

Bid documents will be available for issuance to eligible bidders starting October 24, 2003 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One Thousand (P1,000.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on October 29, 2003, 2:00 P.M. at the OK Pension House, Dumaguete City. Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at the above address not later than 2:00 p.m. of November 13, 2003 and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) SERGIO A.F. APOSTOL
Chairman & President / CEO

(PDI–Sept. 24, 2003)

Attention Dog Owners

FREE SEMINAR!!

What: Pet Pantry Nutrition Seminar
When: September 25, 7:00 pm
Where: Malolos, Bulacan

Speaker: Mr. Don Lockman
for Pet Pantry, USA.
For inquiries, please call 844-2385
and cell is 0916-758-5541

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY SCREENING AND TO BID

Date: September 10, 2003
Contract No. BCMD.2003-003

1. Contract No.: BCMD.2003-003 Supply and Delivery of A New Multi-Role, Single-Engine Helicopter
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of supplying and delivering a new multi-role, single-engine helicopter to TRANSCO.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid is P83,000,000.00.
4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino and Foreign manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, firms and contractors who have the legal technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid.
5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by TRANSCO in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Post qualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
6. Eligibility Documents will be available for issuance on September 12, 2003 at the Bids and Contract Management Department, Ground Floor, Power Center, BIR Road Corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104. Telefax No.: 921-23-08 upon presentation of letter of intent and a payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 per copy.
7. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before October 6, 2003 and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
8. Manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, firms and contractors, not yet included in the TRANSCO's List of Registered Contractors, who wishes to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements, duly notarized, which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A Certificate of Registration will be issued to contractors/suppliers upon approval.
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - Taxpayer's Identification Number;
   - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation;
   - Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;
   - For foreign bidders, the required documents applicable to entities doing business in the Philippines shall be substituted by the appropriate equivalent documents issued by foreign bidder's country, which documents shall be duly acknowledge or authenticated by the Philippine Consulate therein.
9. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive and required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address

(Sgd.) WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee &
Vice President, Eng'g. Design and Construction

(PDI–Sept. 11, 16 & 24, 2003)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

A. The University of the Philippines Diliman hereby invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility to bid for:

   Lease of the basement area of Vinzons Hall with an approximate area of 237.5 sq.m. which is suitable for an art gallery, bookstore, business center, clothing apparel store, laundromat, fitness center, music store and a shop for antiques, curios and collectibles.

B. The following eligibility requirements in two copies, duly certified must be submitted to the Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO) at Instructional Materials Corp. Building (National Book Development Board), A. Regidor Street fronting the PAG-ASA Astronomical Observatory, U.P. Campus, Diliman, Quezon City, to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:
   1. SEC/DTI/Cooperative Development Registration Papers
   2. 2003 Business License/Permit
   3. Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years (2001 & 2002) with accompanying Audited Financial Statements marked 'RECEIVED' by the BIR
   4. Company Profile
   5. List of clients (past and present) with corresponding contract costs, references and supporting documents
   6. List of company equipment and other assets
   7. Statement of the company that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, offices or corporations

DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE BID DOCUMENTS

The above mentioned requirements must be completely submitted in two (2) separate folders with Table of Contents and properly tabbed. Otherwise, the same will not be accepted by the SPMO.

NOTE: ONLY ELIGIBLE BIDDERS WILL BE ISSUED THE BID DOCUMENTS AND ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BIDDING.

C. Deadline for submission: October 10, 2003
D. Pre-bidding and bidding schedules shall be announced to all eligible bidders.
E. The University of the Philippines reserves the right to review the qualifications of all selected bidders subject to technical, financial and production criteria, reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect therein and accept the offer considered to be most advantageous to the University.
E. For further particulars, please inquire from Mr. Pedro E. Fajardo, Chief-SPMO, anytime during office hours at the above mentioned address or call Tel. No. 920-5374 (direct line) and 920-5301 local 4331, 4911 and 4913, or contract the Business Concessions Office (BCO) at Tel. No. 925-6996 and 920-5301 local 7926.

(Sgd.) EMERLINDA R. ROMAN
Chancellor

(PDI – Sept. 24 & Oct. 1, 2003)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN
PANGASIWAAN SA PATALAAN NG LUPAIN
(LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY)
East Avenue cor. NIA Road
Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Registration Authority (LRA) invites all interested Medium "A" contractors, duly registered with the Government-Electronic Procurement System (G-EPS), to participate in the public bidding for the construction of the Proposed Registry of Deeds Building of Batangas Province. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid is PESOS THREE MILLION EIGHT HUNDRED SEVENTY FIVE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED TWENTY (P3,875,820.00) and the contract duration shall be for a period of One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days. The source of funding is SARO No. C-02-06700 dated December 13, 2002.

Interested Contractors shall be required to submit a LETTER OF INTENT, addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee for Infrastructure Projects (BAC-Infrastructure), 5th Floor, LRA Building, East Avenue corner NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone no. 924-47-33 and shall submit for registration, a certified true copy of the following documents (originals to be presented for authentication):

a. G-EPS
b. DTI or SEC Registration Certificate
c. Mayor's Permit and Renewal of PCAB Contractor's License as of fiscal year 2003
d. Taxpayer's Identification Number
e. Sworn statement from the prospective bidder that it is not included in the "blacklist" issued by CIAP.

Eligibility Forms can be secured from the BAC-Infrastructure Secretariat, 5th Floor, LRA Building, from **October 02 to 09, 2003**, upon payment of a non refundable fee of PESOS FIVE HUNDRED (P500.00)

Deadline for the submission of eligibility requirements is on **October 17, 2003.** Prospective bidders shall present the original documents of all eligibility requirements for authentication purposes. Eligible parties shall be issued a complete set of Bid Documents on **October 31, 2003** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS THREE THOUSAND (P3,000.00)

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the LRA, Multi-Purpose Hall, 5th Floor, LRA Building on **November 05, 2003** at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

Sealed bids in two (2) envelopes shall be received and opened at the LRA Multi Purpose Hall on **November 17, 2003** at 10:00 o'clock a.m.

The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality in the bids received, and accept such offer that may be considered most advantageous to LRA. The bidder shall bear all costs in the preparation of their bids and the government shall in no case be responsible or liable for their costs regardless of the outcome of the bidding process.

(Sgd.) EDILBERTO R. FELICIANO
Chairman, BAC-Infrastructure

(PDI–Sept 17, 24 & Oct 1, 2003)

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Our dearly beloved Daddy

ATTY. VICENTE "DENG" TORRES OCAMPO

of Tondo, Manila and Tanza, Cavite

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on September 21, 2003 at the age of 84.

His beloved wife, **"Tala" (†)**; loving children, **Juliet & Dante Luistro (†)**, **Aida** and **Gus Santos**, **Nelia** and **Johnny Julian**, **Antonio "Chito"** and **Myrtel**, **Vicente, Jr. "Boying"**, **Atty. Ramoncito "Monching"** and **Ester**, **Gloria "Nenette"** and **Joon Navarro**, **Pepper** and **Cielo**, his grandchildren and great grandchildren, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the "Ocampo" residence in Tondo, Manila until Thursday evening and will be transferred to Funeraria Paz, Sucat, Parañaque on Friday morning September 26, 2003.

Interment will be on Tuesday, September 30, 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory
on the First Death Anniversary of

DR. VIRGILIO V. CALICA

who passed away on September 24, 2002

His children **Victor**, **Leila** (+), **Cynthia** and **Grace** shall offer Holy Masses at the following churches:

St. John the Evangelist Church 6:00AM
Guimba, Nueva Ecija

Paco Parish Church 7:00AM
Paco, Manila

Parish of Our Lady of Light 6:00AM
Cainta, Rizal

Immaculate Concepcion Parish 7:00AM
Antipolo Cathedral, Antipolo City

Our wife, mother, sister, teacher, counselor, leader, and friend, has joyfully transferred to our Heavenly Home.

PILAR SALVO VILLADOLID

Please join us: **Rene, Nina & Maui**, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends in prayers and in gratitude to God and Mary.

Her remains lie in state at Our Lady of the Pillar Church, Pilar Village, Almanza, Las Piñas.

Interment will be on Sunday, September 28, 2003 at the Garden of Memories Pateros, Rizal after the 11:00 a.m. Mass in Pillar Village Church.

MERCEDES A. LEVISTE

Peacefully joined our Lord on September 21, 2003
at the age of 86.

Her loving children **Sonny & Baby Leviste**, children **Tracy, Jeff, Kathy & King Bitanga**, great-granddaughter, **Kylie**; **Marites & Nonie Guison** children **Maris, Nina & Jay**; **Jojo & Lynette Leviste**; her stepchildren & their families request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

She lies in state at La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) and will be transferred to the family residence at Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro on Friday, September 26, 2003.

Interment will be on Tuesday, September 30, 2003.

We announce the departure for heaven of our beloved,

ESTER S.J. GAERLAN

UP '48, Sigma Delta Phi Sorority
July 18, 1923 – September 20, 2003

We, her loving children Manolet, Cayito and Johnny together with our spouses, Vicky, Evelyn, Brenda and Ushee; and her grandchildren Fluellen, Cristina, Claudine, Karlo, Nikolai, Viktor, BJ, Kat-Kat, Mikey, Coco, Jasper, Megan and Marcus, along with her siblings and their spouses, Aurora and Vic Garcia, Manuel (†) and Rosie Gaerlan, Luz and Tito Lopez, Ben and Linda Gaerlan and all her nephews and nieces and their children, joyfully commend her spirit to the merciful hands of the Almighty. We ask all relatives and friends and all the pious readers to join us in thanking and praising GOD for the gift of her life on earth and a peaceful return to the eternal kingdom where eternal rest awaits her

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 11, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Cremation will be on September 26, 2003 at Paz Crematory following a thanksgiving mass at 11:00 a.m.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."
Psalm 23:1, 6

In Loving Memory
on the 1st Death Anniversary of

SERGIO G. DE GALA

of
Candelaria, Quezon
(September 24, 2002)

President and Chairman of the Board
of the
RURAL BANK OF TAGKAWAYAN, INC.
Tagkawayan, Quezon

We find strength and we are humbly grateful to you all in knowing that he touched so many lives in his concern for others. He will continue living on in our hearts and through the lives we lead as testament to his legacy of love.

Holy Mass will be offered on Wednesday, September 24, 2003 at 10:00 AM in San Pedro Bautista Parish Church, Candelaria, Quezon.

We, his family, mother **Mrs. Agueda de Gala**; wife **Mrs. Anicia de Gala**; children **Dinia & Fred Macalindong**, **Diodel** (†) & **Vicky de Gala**, **Dulce & Erning Liwanag**, **Danny & Bong de Gala** and **Ma. Cecilia de Gala**; his grandchildren, brothers and sisters and nephew, and those lives had been touched by our beloved Tatay Sergio request the pious readeres to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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"God has you in His keeping; we have you in our hearts."

MARIANO CONCEPCION G. PEREZ

Born: Dec. 8, 1932

Returned to his Creator on September 22, 2003

His beloved wife **Ma. Consolatrix Ramos**; daughter **Maria**; mother-in-law **Rizalina Ramos**; sisters **Loly Isiderio, Natividad Gonzalez, Manuela Samson**; in-laws **Vicente Samson, Greto & Edna Ramos, Nieka Ramos**; nephews and nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces, relatives, friends and the community of Our Lady of the Pillar Parish request the reader to pray for his eternal repose.

His body lies in state at the Venice Chapel, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque. Interment will be on Thursday, September 25 at the Court of Everlasting Peace, Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque, after the 9:00 A.M. Mass at the Loyola Chapel.

The Bishop, The Clergy and the Christian Faithful of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Urdaneta
and the
Family, Relatives and Friends
Announce with deep sorrow the untimely demise of

REV. MSGR. MANUEL G. BARAAN, EV

(June 17, 1938 – September 19, 2003)

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Lingayen, Pangasinan. On Thursday, September 25, at 2:00 p.m., his body will be transferred to the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Urdaneta City

Interment follows after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Co-Cathedral of Epiphany in Lingayen, Pangasinan on September 26, 2003.

CLASSIFIEDS

NFA supports anti smuggling drive

THE NATIONAL Food Authority today said that while it fully supports the government's drive to curb rice smuggling, it neither has the police power to go after rice smugglers nor the authority to apprehend the perpetrators.

In reaction to a news report that came out in some broad sheets on September 22, NFA Administrator Arthur C. Yap also clarified that the NFA does not issue import permit to traders which is allegedly being recycled and used for rice smuggling.

An authorized rice importation is now based on the ability of Farmer Organizations (FOs) or other sectors to open a letter of credit, document against acceptance or document against payment with the Land Bank of the Philippines.

The specific role of the NFA is to issue a license as importer to FOs joining the Farmers as Importer (FAI) program. The license as importer is granted after carefully validating the actual existence of the cooperative based on the documents submitted and an ocular inspection conducted by NFA field offices where the cooperative operates, Yap said.

Although NFA is not the agency primarily responsible in controlling smuggling, it nevertheless cooperates with the government agencies directly involved in curbing the problem.

Upon the request of the Bureau of Customs, the NFA instituted the issuance of shipping clearance for inter-island domestic transfer of rice, Yap said.

This clearance, according to Yap, allows the BoC and PNP to keep track of a paper trail to verify whether the rice arriving at their areas are sourced domestically or smuggled from other countries.

For quick verification of shipping clearances, NFA allows the BoC to verify and text NFA through the internet.

Through the agency's laboratory analysis, Yap noted, the NFA also assists anti-smuggling agencies in testing rice suspected to be smuggled.

BUSINESS

BSP 'comfortable' with current exchange rate

By Elena R. Torrijos

DUBAI, UAE—Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he was "reasonably comfortable" with the current rate of the peso against the dollar and saw no need for the central monetary authority to intervene in the foreign exchange market.

Buenaventura, however, said during an investor briefing organized by Citigroup last Monday that the peso should be hovering closer to P52 than the current P55 if not for "non-economic events" such as the military mutiny last July and increased mudslinging and politicking that caused investors to stay at the sidelines.

Buenaventura predicted that the exchange rate would remain volatile but stressed that the BSP would be ready to move in to keep fluctuations under control.

"If we feel the foreign exchange movement is not based on fundamentals, we can step in, but if supply and demand factors (are at work), we will allow the peso to seek its own level," Buenaventura said.

The peso moved around P53.71 to the dollar during the first eight months of the year but fell to around P54.98 this month.

The government assumed a peso rate of between 52 and 54 in its budget for the year.

Buenaventura pointed out, however, that the country's gross international reserves remained at a comfortable level of $16.2 billion as of August this year and remittances from Overseas Filipino Workers continued to flow, providing the BSP with enough ammunition to check the peso level should it further depreciate against the US dollar.

Buenaventura and other government officials are in Dubai to attend the IMF World Bank annual meetings and to meet with their counterparts and potential investors.

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BOI to issue new rules on MVDP

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BOARD of Investments (BOI) will draw up a new set of guidelines for vehicle manufacturers applying for incentives under the Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVDP) by the end of the month.

The BOI suspended last August the processing of applications for incentives under the MVDP due to the lack of "appropriate" requirements to make sure that only qualified car companies would be granted the incentives.

"The guidelines will set the criteria for determining the qualified applicants. These will clarify the procedures and requirements of the program," Trade and Industry Undersecretary Gregory Domingo said in a briefing yesterday.

"We have to see whether the existing policies are still appropriate for the current environment," he added.

Under the old guidelines, the minimum investment required in the manufacturing of parts of components was $10 million for cars, $8 million for commercial vehicles and $2 million for motorcycles.

With the current review of the guidelines, the BOI might increase the investment requirement.

The MVDP, which was implemented under EO No. 156, was aimed at boosting the local automotive industry through various government support and incentives.

Perks under the MVDP include export incentives for car manufacturers exporting completely built-up units, prohibition of importation of second-hand vehicles and realignment of taxes on raw materials.

Caltex to stop refinery operations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CALTEX Philippines Inc. yesterday announced that it would mothball its refinery in Batangas and pour in P750 million to convert the complex into an import terminal for finished petroleum products.

Caltex country chair Timothy Leveille told reporters yesterday that the refinery "had reached the end of its useful economic life" amid the rise of bigger and more modern refineries in the region.

Leveille said the conversion of the refinery did not mean a step back for the company as the new import terminal—which would be operational by December—would transform the complex into a regional supply and distribution hub.

The converted terminal would have a storage capacity of 2.7 million barrels or more than half of Caltex's total storage capacity of 4 million barrels in the country.

Leveille said Caltex had no choice but to stop the refinery's operations as the capacity of the 49-year-old facility was too small at 72,000 barrels per day (bpd), thus, could not compete with other refineries that have greater economies of scale, some of which could process up to 200,000 bpd.

He said the production from these refineries resulted in an excess refining capacity in Asia Pacific and the Middle East to the tune of 1.2 million barrels.

The Batangas refinery represented less than 0.4 percent of the total refining capacity of 22 million barrels a day available to supply the region, he said.

"The capital investment required to modernize the Batangas refinery is not economically viable. Clean Air Act specifications require (an investment) in an already uncompetitive facility," the official added.

Caltex, along with the other two local refiners Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Corp., had resorted to importing products or additives to meet the new standards implemented starting in 2002.

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'Rejects' tells familiar love stories

The All-American Rejects
MCA Universal

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

INTRODUCED to the "Simple Plan is cool and Avril rocks" generation as one of the "breakthrough" Indie bands on MTV 2, the Oklahoma band has successfully made its way up the charts with its radio-friendly single, "Swing Swing." It doesn't hurt that its video serves up some serious eye candy in the form of vocalist Tyson Ritter (hey, it worked for John Mayer!).

The band's re-released self-titled major label debut under Dreamworks (the first was under independent label Doghouse) has the critics either raving or ranting. For one, many say Taar is very much like Weezer after a few happy pills.

The band members cry about girls who have done them wrong. But they're far from destructive. Yes, critics have labeled them as "emo" more than once, what with their fusion of pop and punk beats that has induced a lot of last-song syndromes among those who bought the album (or downloaded some tracks). But then, while many would deny it, most people do love a mushy, heartfelt love song every now and then. Especially if it's about unrequited love.

Looking for love

As far as lyrics go, the album is all about love-losing it, falling out of it, and getting dumped. The opening track, "My Paper Heart," pretty much sums up what these guys are looking for: a normal relationship that doesn't involve a lot of heartache ("Please just don't play with me/ My paper heart will be/ This wait for destiny won't do/ Be with me, please/ I beseech you").

Expect every track to have its own twist on being dumped—"Don't Leave Me" is about the confusion of a heartbreak ("Leave me once and I'll be fine/ Leave me twice, I'll make you mine"), while "Too Far Gone" touches on the usual "girl likes boy, boy doesn't like girl, then boy wants girl back" scenario.

That is why we don't get why critics bash this album so much. If divas can wail about love, boys, and heartache, why can't former Indie artists who have signed with a major label do the same?

And it's not like they're trying to cover up for the cheesiness of the album. Ritter has confessed that all the songs are about his ex-girlfriends. Granted that some lyrics seem to belong in a New Found Glory song ("P.S. I love you/ Forever and today"—"Drive Away"), Taar pulls it off with catchy melodies that sum up the album's production

This is as sugary-sweet as emo punk gets: think radio-friendly hooks and toe-tapping beats. They've milked technology of all it has to offer, from programmable keyboards to redundant drum machines. Clearly, this debut is an experiment in pop music. Although many would consider it a lame attempt, it fits right in with today's generic pop-punk acts and the "woe is me" attitude.

The only question is whether the band can come up with even better stuff after its stint on the TRL countdown. As "The Last Song" goes, "I still hope you will miss me when I'm gone." In that case, they better get more women to break up with them to avoid getting into another VH1 "Where Are They Now?" documentary.

Until then, we're hopping on pogo sticks around our rooms to this album.

Tell your story, get a CD

WIN the All-American Rejects!

Well, not the band, but the album. The fabulously generous folks at MCA Universal gave us three CDs and, after debating whether or not we should keep them or give them away, we chose the latter.

All you have to do is send your own story on love lost or heartache to contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph on or before 12 noon, Sept. 22. Remember, the story has to be original (plagiarists suck) and, although we occasionally laugh at entries, we promise not to print the winners' pieces-just the names, so don't forget to write your full name. Good Luck!

EQUAL RIGHTS

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Anything but the usual

UP Babaylan's annual show is as colorful as a butterfly

By Shahani Gania
2bU! Correspondent

THOSE expecting another typical drag show with feather boas and Village People rejects, must have forgotten to leave stereotypes at the door.

UP Babaylan's "Absolutely Androgyny," its annual variety show, was anything but the usual. Sure, there were fabulous drag queens, handsome gay men and some lesbian loving, but the slogans "equal rights" and "end discrimination" were apparent in every number that you'd be stupid (or just plain homophobic) if you didn't notice.

I don't think it's because of Mariah Carey that the gay, lesbian and bisexual community decided to make the rainbow butterfly their symbol of pride. Nevertheless, the state university's Oblation "grew" colorful wings and is now the new logo of the gay students' organization.

The fascination with butterflies was also the inspiration for the show's fantastic opening act that used black-lighting with some candles being moved around like fireflies and dancers turning into—yup, you guessed it!—butterflies.

Hitting the jackpot

The show's director and costume designer, Joel Acebuche, sure hit the jackpot in production design. It was so amazing, that, although my head was just shaved that day, my hair (or roots!) was standing on end.

One of the most applauded numbers was the very timely monologue, *"Ang Huling Baklang Birhen Sa Lupa,"* brilliantly delivered by Karl "Carmen" Hinayon. He was so good that his spoof of Maui Taylor seemed almost better than the spoof of Nora Aunor in "Himala." Perhaps that particular number mocked evangelist Judiel Nieva, but it definitely poked fun at the "sinful" lives of gay men and women of the new generation.

My favorite part was the number choreographed by ace dancer Dan Salvana. Titled "The Love Suite," it featured three different gay love stories told through dance and popular songs of Regine Velasquez and Gary V. It was so beautiful and sad at the same time—a cross-dresser (Salvana) in love with a straight guy, a closet gay man (Ronnel Atienza) marrying a woman, and a gay man's (Dennis Mendoza) lover (Bed Bar's Jay Santos) stolen from him. The stories were classic tales of doomed romance interpreted in a way that would break anyone's heart. After watching Salvana twist and turn on stage, I've taken Velasquez's *"Pangarap Ko ay Ibigin Ka"* off from my cheesy OPM (original Pilipino music) list.

Promoting gay awareness

All shows have their hits and misses, and "Absolutely Androgyny" is no exception. There was an occasional "dead air," some punch lines that didn't click but, all in all, the show was immensely entertaining. And it accomplished its mission to promote gay awareness.

In the final spiel, the serious issues of discrimination and gay bashing inside the University of the Philippines were raised. It brought up last year's campaign for a UP Babaylan member to hold the top position in the University Student Council. The idea was met with scorn and ridicule, and the proponents called imbeciles and fairies.

The campus paper allegedly supported this disdainful attitude. Apparently, even in an environment as liberated as UP, many bigots and homophobes exist.

The promotion of gay awareness and acceptance didn't end when the show ended. As the final spiel said, "Some butterflies just don't die in two weeks' time."

Expect these butterflies to fly "(even) higher towards goals that have never been reached."

I give the show two thumbs up. UP Babaylan did well. Next year it would be even better.

Eva Mendes' Depp love...

From page C1

makes her resemble Crawford. Mendes admits, "I have a total crush on Johnny Depp ever since I was a young girl." Mendes, 29, who gained the most recognition for her unforgettable role starring opposite Oscar-winner Denzel Washington in "Training Day," says that she used to cut magazine photos and articles of Depp and hang them on her wall.

"Then I would stare at them and just swoon 'Oh, Johnny!'" she exclaims. The tall and slim Revlon Cosmetics print and TV commercial model-actress exudes a dreamy, lovesick look every time she talks about Johnny.

"Oh my God, first of all, there's that beauty factor. I'm sorry but Johnny is one of the most beautiful men I have ever seen in my life. And knowing that when I was growing up as a little girl, I actually had his pictures up on the wall, I was just like 'Johnnyyyyy,' you know," she says breathlessly. "It was just crazy. I bought all these Tiger Beat, Teen Beat, Big Rocker fan magazines and cut all his pictures. He was the guy who's my total complete crush, and then suddenly, I am making a movie with him! So it was really interesting that he was the only person that I really worked with that dated back so far," she says and then giggles. "I have to admit, I am totally in love with him!"

Mendes, who was discovered at a garage sale in Los Angeles by a photographer five years ago while attending college as a marketing major, is not embarrassed to disclose her "Depp love" for Johnny.

Mr. Cool

The lanky actress admits that she never told Johnny Depp she had pictures of him on her wall. "Oh no," she says, "You don't tell Johnny Depp that you have a big crush on him. He is the epitome of cool. He is Mr. No Big Deal, Mr. I-Can-Handle-This. No way I will tell him that," she adds.

"And another thing that surprises me is how funny he really is," she says.

"I know you saw him in the movie, but in person, he is really naturally funny as well. He is just so dreamy."

It's hard to believe that this is the same Mendes whom I just saw acting so cold and brutal in "Once Upon A Time in Mexico." She has transformed into a seemingly incurable lovesick puppy every time the name "Johnny" is mentioned.

A college dropout who pursued her acting calling, Mendes was trained in the thespian arts by Ivana Chubbuck, the same mentor to such actresses as Elizabeth Shue and Halle Berry. She adds that if she were not acting today, she would be an interior decorator. "Definitely, I would still be doing something creative," she points out.

EVA Mendes

This hot Cuban-American who grew up in Los Angeles but "was conceived in Cuba," confesses that one of her most unforgettable moments in "Once Upon" was when her dreamboat, Johnny, kissed her onscreen. "What else can you ask for? He's so heavenly!" she blurts out dreamily.

She confesses that she never knew that Johnny Depp would be in the movie as well. "No, that was my next big surprise," she tells us. "When I got the role, I was already ecstatic. Then I heard that Johnny Depp is being offered the part of Sands, the CIA agent. I'm like, 'He's not gonna do it. Don't even get excited because he's not even gonna do it. He's gonna be busy or something. So don't expect anything, girl!' I kept telling myself those words. Then when they told me he accepted the part, I was just floored!" She clasps her hands together like a little girl who was just given an unexpected ice cream treat for doing nothing.

Mendes, who was born in Houston, Texas, and grew up in the City of Angels, loves this town. "My parents love to tell the story that I almost made it to Miami." She explains, "My parents came from Cuba and my mother was pregnant with me when she arrived in the States. My mom was so close to her due date when they arrived in Miami. That's why they always love to tell the story that I almost made it to Miami."

On working with director Robert Rodriguez, she admits, "I love working with Robert. He's talking to you on how to do a scene and at the same time he has the camera on his hand, trying to figure out the best angle to shoot you. I love it! I also like the idea of using a high definition camera to do the movie since we get to see instantly how we are doing. So with the high definition camera, we actually saved more time."

Family feeling

Mendes adds, "It's so hard talking about Robert without talking about his wife, Elizabeth Avellan, who's also our producer. She's the best. She's an incredible woman. She's really an active part of the whole machinery that they have created. Actually, the ambience they (Robert and Elizabeth) have created on the set is more like a family setting. Robert plays music. There's a lot of hugging and kissing. And there's lots of food always. It was fun and special in that way. I think I really got spoiled."

On whether she auditioned for the part or it was simply handed over to her, Mendes recalls, "What happened was really funny. My agent tells me that I will meet Robert in Texas just to chat and meet. So I go over there, meet with Robert and talk to him when suddenly, he hands me the script and says, 'Here, why don't you read a few lines.' I was surprised! I thought to myself, 'Whooooa! I mean, oh my gosh, I want to be prepared. I want it broken down. I want it to be perfect. However, I was already there so I read it and I really liked the character, too. In addition, I also really wanted to work with Robert since I know he's good. I'm just glad I got the part."

"Once," which opened with an impressive $24 million in the US, also stars Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek and pop singer Enrique Iglesias in his film debut. All of them, including Depp, got a chance from director Rodriguez to compose their own songs for the musical score of the movie. Did Mendes get to do one as well?

"No, I wasn't given a chance. However, I don't really mind because you don't want me to sing! One thing is definite, I won't be having any album or something in my future!" she says with a laugh.

Asked if there are more roles now for Latinos and other minority groups, she observes, "I think it's definitely getting better. The quality of roles is getting better. There are still the crappy ones out there and there's still the stereotype stuff but the quality is getting better since the five years that I've been in the business. And what I've seen in five years is really an improvement."

Mendes, who also recently completed "Stuck on You" with Greg Kinnear and Matt Damon and slated for a winter 2003 release, discloses that she is currently doing a film with Luke Wilson, who is directing and starring in it as well. She will be seen with Denzel again in the coming "Out of Time."

On whether she has any other dream role that she has been wanting to do, she takes a deep breath and longingly replies, "That's easy. A romantic comedy with Johnny Depp!"

Boyfriend isn't in a hurry to come home

Niño Mark Sablan & September Mabino

DEAR Mark and Sep,

My boyfriend left for abroad in March 2000. He's been away for almost four years now and every time I ask him to come home, he says he wants to earn more money for our future before returning. I really love him so much that I wait for him. I can't break up with him but I'm concerned about my age. I'm turning 27 while he's only 23. I want to get married and have a family. What shall I do? He can't even say when he's going to come back. I'm so lonely.

HONEY

Four years is a pretty long time and a lot of things can happen during that period. Make a mental list of all the drool-worthy dudes you've met, the various experiences you've had and the many funerals and baptisms you've attended and you'll realize that your boyfriend has also been going through various, nameless things.

Even if you're positively peachy and sunshine-y, make sure you know the definitions of delusion and denial so you can determine what you're experiencing right now. Think about him fooling around and, worse, spending all the money supposedly for your future on another girl!

If he seriously believes you are The One he will spend the rest of his life with, the least he can give you is a fixed date of his return.

A major confrontation is the best way to go. How can he let you just float around waiting for him? How can you waste your time waiting for someone who's not sure about his ETA (estimated time of arrival), or if he plan to come home?

Seems like his youth and immaturity are making him enjoy life to the fullest, turning a deaf ear to the ticking of your biological clock. Confront, confirm and move on if you have to.

MARK

Question: Why do you think you can't break up with your absentee boyfriend? Is it because you think you're too old already to be unattached again? Or is it because the two of you have been a couple for so long that it will be a shame to throw all those years away just because you're feeling lonely?

I simply cannot believe that you love this guy so much that you wait for him without complaint, but then again, I'm an impatient person.

Honestly, though, I think you've wasted the last four years of your life holding your breath for someone who doesn't seem to care. It's now time to tip the scale in your favor. You have to let your boyfriend know how you're feeling and what you'd like to happen.

Give him an ultimatum. Tell him that he should at least have enough respect for you to at least be honest about his expectations from the relationship. And quit accepting the vague reasons he has been giving you! That whole saving-for-the-future spiel in his recording machine is an unreliable source of hope/self-delusion. Believe me: Four years of physical separation and a 23-year-old guy is still enthusiastic about and working for the future of a relationship? About as logical as a fish needing a bike.

SEPTEMBER

E-mail the writers at markandsep@yahoo.com

Dude, where's your virginity?

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

"DUDE, virgin *ka pa ba*?"

For those who were (and there were quite a few), they either mumbled, "Yeah," their eyes darting furtively around the cafeteria, or haughtily answered, "Of course, I am," their chests puffing in pride.

But then I dropped the bomb: "No, I mean virgin in the strictest sense. And that means no monkey business. Ever."

Some looked at me funny. Others looked like they wanted to whack me on the head. But mostly, they just looked plain uncomfortable.

Good thing they were all good friends of mine.

Then again, the fact that they were my friends makes me sorry I even asked.

Being "just one of the boys," I, a girl, have hung out with guy buddies long enough for them to act (almost) natural around me.

After years of hearing all that male banter and toilet humor, though, I wondered if there were any virgin guys in the world.

By virgins, I mean males who not only have never engaged in the act, but also in any act—masturbation, sexual escapade and naughty little stuff.

Of course, I might just as well have been referring to a vegetable, but that's what this whole article is about.

Patriarchy

Let's face it—no matter how modern our society has become, significant traces of patriarchal domination still exist.

As late as 20 years ago, non-virgin women would be branded as "deviant."

On the other hand, if you're male and a virgin, you're not only deviant but downright weird as well.

Given guys' macho story-swapping, note-comparing sessions, I can only imagine how utterly mortifying it is for a male to admit he hasn't done the deed yet. What more if the female populace finds out about his secret?

While some females think it sweet, others prefer their men to have learned the ropes so that it wouldn't be awkward when the time comes.

As a friend had told me, point-blank, "A virgin guy? Man... how you two will survive the night is beyond me."

Which is precisely why those rare male specimens choose to hibernate instead. No wonder "American Pie" became such a huge success.

Reason vs urges

Asked if they believed male virgins exist, my male friends snickered and said no, since men allegedly have stronger and therefore more uncontrollable hormones.

Of course, they have yet to chop logic with my biology professor, who also happens to be a doctor. He widely dismisses the notion, saying that there is no known genetic or hormonal explanation for either celibacy or "horniness."

While it is only natural for living beings to feel the urge and let raging hormones take over, humans cannot use their biological nature as the sole justification for sexual behavior. "If this is the case, then what makes us any different from animals?" And he's right.

My zoology and philosophy classes agreed that while humans are equipped with the capacity to reflect on their actions, animals are not.

Then there's the widely held view that while women tend toward emotional pleasure, men tend toward carnal fulfillment, hence the ubiquitous secret stash of Playboy magazines under every guy's bed.

But women can be just as chaste or as horny as men. It's not really a matter of gender differences; each person, whether male, female or otherwise, has his or her own way of dealing with sexual urges. Psychologists would say it's all just a matter of willpower.

Moral issues

One inevitably has to contend with the issue of religion when touching upon virginity.

In a predominantly Catholic society, it's odd that smaller religious sects seem more steadfast in upholding virginity.

Some Born-again or Protestant Christian friends tell me that they know some men from their sects who are already in their 20s and even 30s, but who have remained virgins.

No, they were not born comatose and no, they are not training to become ministers.

Even those who have been in long-term relationships earnestly claim that they have remained virgins until marriage.

They are not completely innocent, though. They all admit to giving in to a little "fun" every once in a while.

Then again, if there's even someone who is totally and irrevocably spotless, then I have yet to meet him.

Fact or fiction?

Given all the arguments, is there such a thing as a male virgin?

The answer is both yes and no. While stereotypes about male machismo still prevail, the fact remains that males can control themselves and can be just as virginal as females.

But because our patriarchal society can be mean, no male is bragging about the fact he's a virgin.

As for the "pure virgins" that I was wondering about, well... maybe I'd have better luck finding Nemo instead.

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko@hotmail.com.

BaSToooos
AMERICAN PIE
stephs

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Pre-Christmas bazaar in Ayala Alabang

THE WOODROSE '98 Educational Foundation is holding its annual Woodrose pre-Christmas Family Bazaar on Sept. 27-28 at the Cuenca Community Center, Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City.

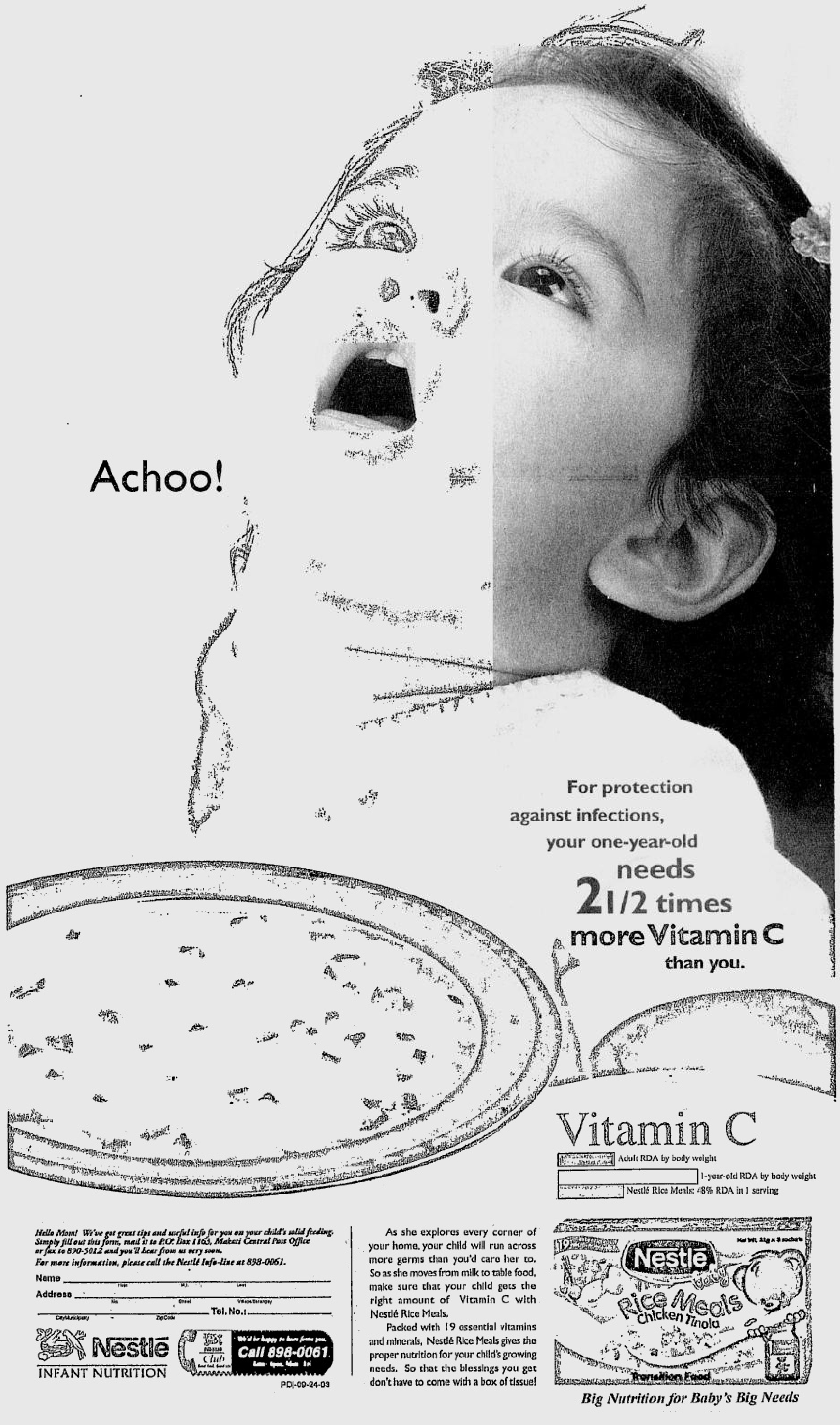
The exhibit, organized by alumnae headed by Anne Ablaza, Margarita dela Fuente and Pamela Imperial and cosponsored by Cherifer Multi-Vitamins and 106.3 FM Rock Radio Cafe, will feature activities such as painting, balloon sculpting and a football festival among students from private schools.

Booths will showcase food, clothes, shoes, bags, Halloween and Christmas decor, accessories, jewelry, perfumes, novelty and gift items, and many more.

A contest on the most creative exhibit will also be held, with big prizes and surprises for the winners.

The foundation has been organizing these pre-Christmas bazaars in Ayala Alabang Village for five consecutive years, as a means to support developmental programs that will enhance, upgrade and uplift the teaching abilities of Woodrose faculty.

Call Anne Ablaza at 80955081 or 8506380.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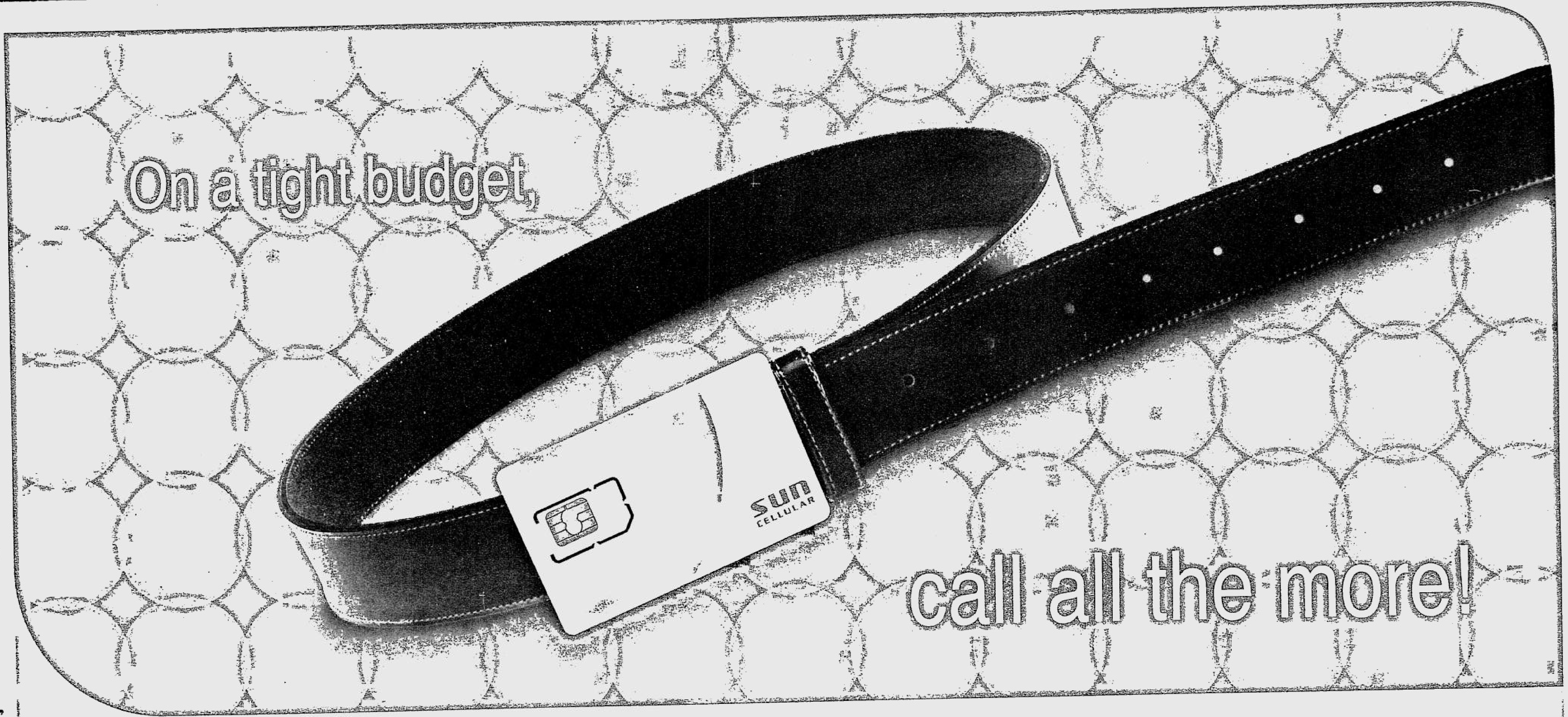

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

BasTooooS
AMERICAN PIE
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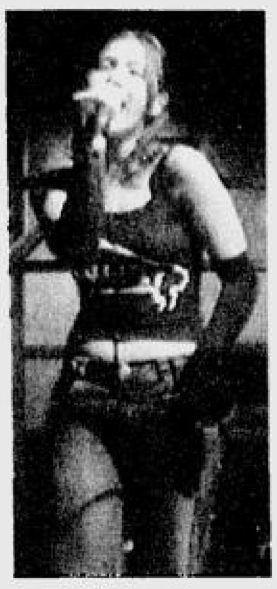
The Virgin Notes Part 2

First times are scary, exciting and exhilarating. This week, we have stories of people taking the big leap, facing new experiences fearlessly.

Join one writer's journey into the world of television.



Read Mojofly vocalist Lougee Basabas' first onstage experience.

Eavesdrop on a conversation with '2 Fast 2 Furious' actress Eva Mendes.

Read about international celebrities who saved it for marriage, and find out which applicants might soon be churning out articles to be enjoyed by you

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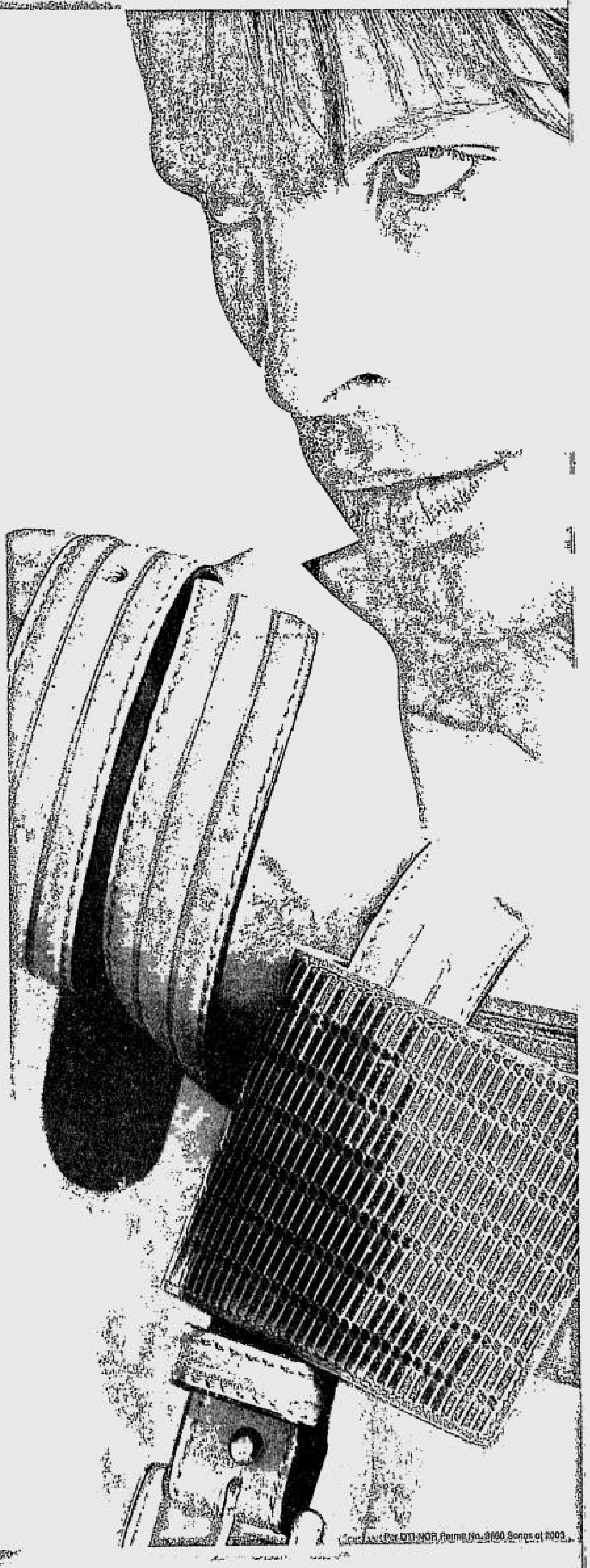

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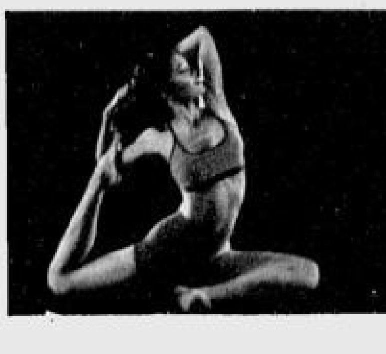


BEING BEAUTIFUL IS NOTHING NEXT TO FEELING BEAUTIFUL

An idiot's guide to hosting

LIGHTS, camera, action at CCA

By Margot Aissa C. Tan
2bU! Correspondent

TELEVISION hosting was harder than I had thought.

Perhaps what got me through shooting one episode of "Campus TV" was that I restrained myself from panicking.

Hosting a TV show is not as glamorous, recklessly fun and easy as pancakes as others think it to be. I had honestly believed that any moron could do it with her eyes closed, so I welcomed the assignment with an obliging heart, an ignorant mind and wide-open arms.

Ideal Minds producer-director Sugar Cabañes had asked me whether I had had any experience in hosting. When I said no, she said it was all right, and I'd do just fine.

She was wrong!

I had been informed that getting "familiar" with the script was not enough, but I was haughty. So at the last minute, I was desperately cramming spiels into my head for each take.

There were many constraints. It was raining, it was getting dark and there was a problem with the lighting. Worse, my boyfriend was waiting downstairs, running out of patience.

My head was spinning and my feet were sore from standing and walking around in anxiety... And to add to my agony, I was wearing my favorite pair of stilettos.

It's no joke to face the camera and to deliver your spiels as if you were just babbling on about any topic off the bat.

I had to look relaxed, confident and well-informed without betraying my insecurity or lack of preparation.

Sugar kept reminding me to look straight and avoid looking up in the air when I struggle for memory.

It was embarrassing to ask videographer Ricky Fiesta and production assistant Marc Go for another take each time my memory failed me or whenever I got my tongue twisted.

There were also external distractions such as someone's cell phone suddenly ringing in the middle of my spiel.

I also had a difficulty clicking with the guests and getting a good conversation rolling with them. I'm no Miss Congeniality, and I couldn't even bring myself to impersonate one for the night.

ACRONYM	MEANING	SHORT EXAMPLE
OBB	Opening Billboard	In this episode of "Campus TV": Teen eating habits—making the grade or degrading by the minute? Also, we visit the Center for Culinary Arts to witness future world-class chefs in action...
CBB	Closing Billboard	*For "Campus TV," the CBB would be all up to the host—you could say goodbye, put up a stunt, go crazy on TV. These are your free personal minutes of fame on cam.
SU*	Stand-Upper	A 2003 nutrition study conducted by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) revealed that the average Filipino diet is generally short of the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA)...
VO	Voice Over	Weight, being an obsession among teens, has become a focus of dissatisfaction. Thus, fad "diets," usually high protein or low carbohydrate that promise weight loss, have become so popular...

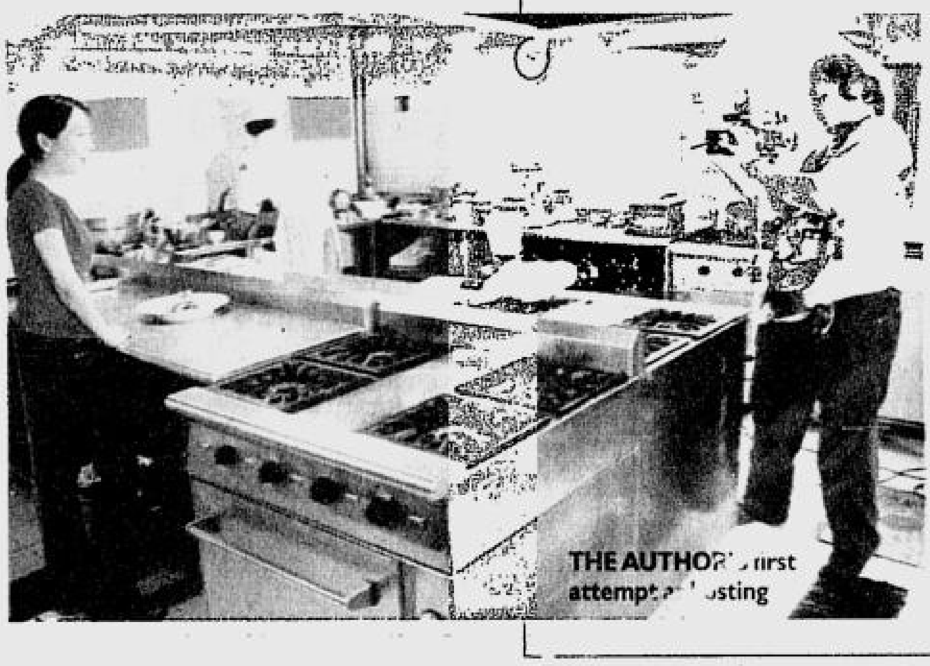
The makeup starts to melt, the hair starts to go haywire and the spiel gets lost in memory

All in all, it was a wild experience for a TV virgin like me.

They made me scream "Dao Ming Si!" at the top of my lungs. I was really filled with laughter and excitement.

I was lucky enough to get away with my boo-boos because of the patient and resourceful "Campus TV" crew that included Anne Talain (production manager), Janine Aguarino (writer/researcher) and Redel Dapul (editor/graphics designer).

It was a rocky ride throughout the night, but TV crew helped me get through relatively unscathed.



THE AUTHOR's first attempt at hosting

Countdown to showtime

THOSE who want to become familiar with TV jargon may learn from my experience:

Date: September 17 (Wednesday)

1:09 a.m.: The script is sent through e-mail. There is constant communication through text messaging with the producer and the scriptwriter to clarify things and to ask questions—from what to wear to what OBB means. (Note: Do not show up looking like a parlor victim. *Walang magpapakulot*, please.)

4 p.m.: Lines are rehearsed in front of the mirror at home. Constant checking of the dictionary ensures one is speaking with the correct diction.

5 p.m.: One goes to the FiX Bench Salon at Glorietta for one's hair and makeup appointment.

6:15 p.m.: One rushes down the escalator and into the car to get to CCA in Katipunan by 7 p.m. sharp, the call time.

6:45 p.m.: One panics because of the heavy traffic.

7:05 p.m.: One arrives at Cravings with time to spare. "Campus TV" crew arrives a few minutes after. They go up the third floor where the Center for Culinary Arts holds classes.

7:20 p.m.: Ricky and Sugar start to look for a good place to do the OBB. One becomes frantic after learning that SU's must be memorized.

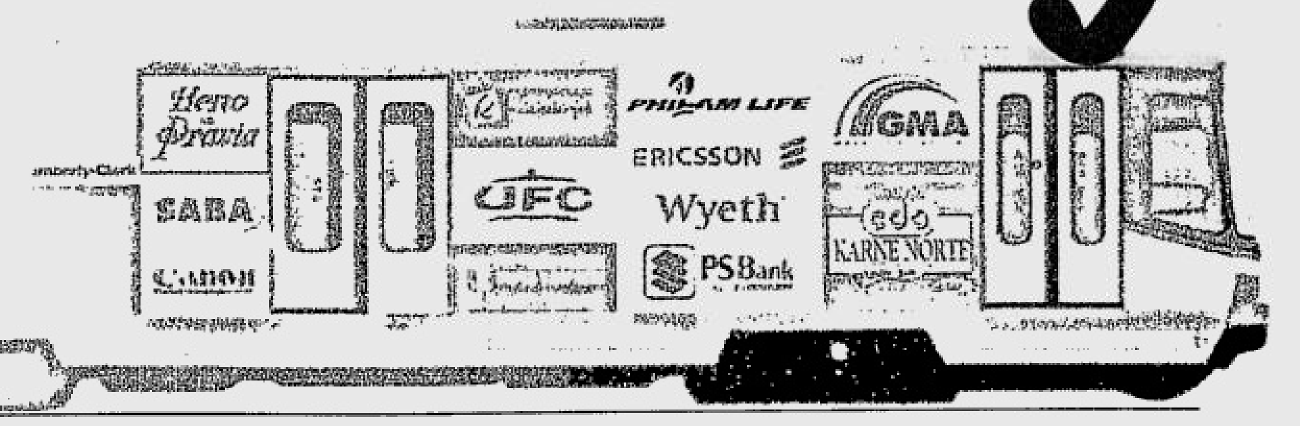
8 p.m.: Shooting continues, Marc gives the signal every now and then. Several short retakes are done. Safety shots taken. The makeup starts to melt, the hair starts to rebel. One brings out a packet of tissue and ties the hair up into a pony.

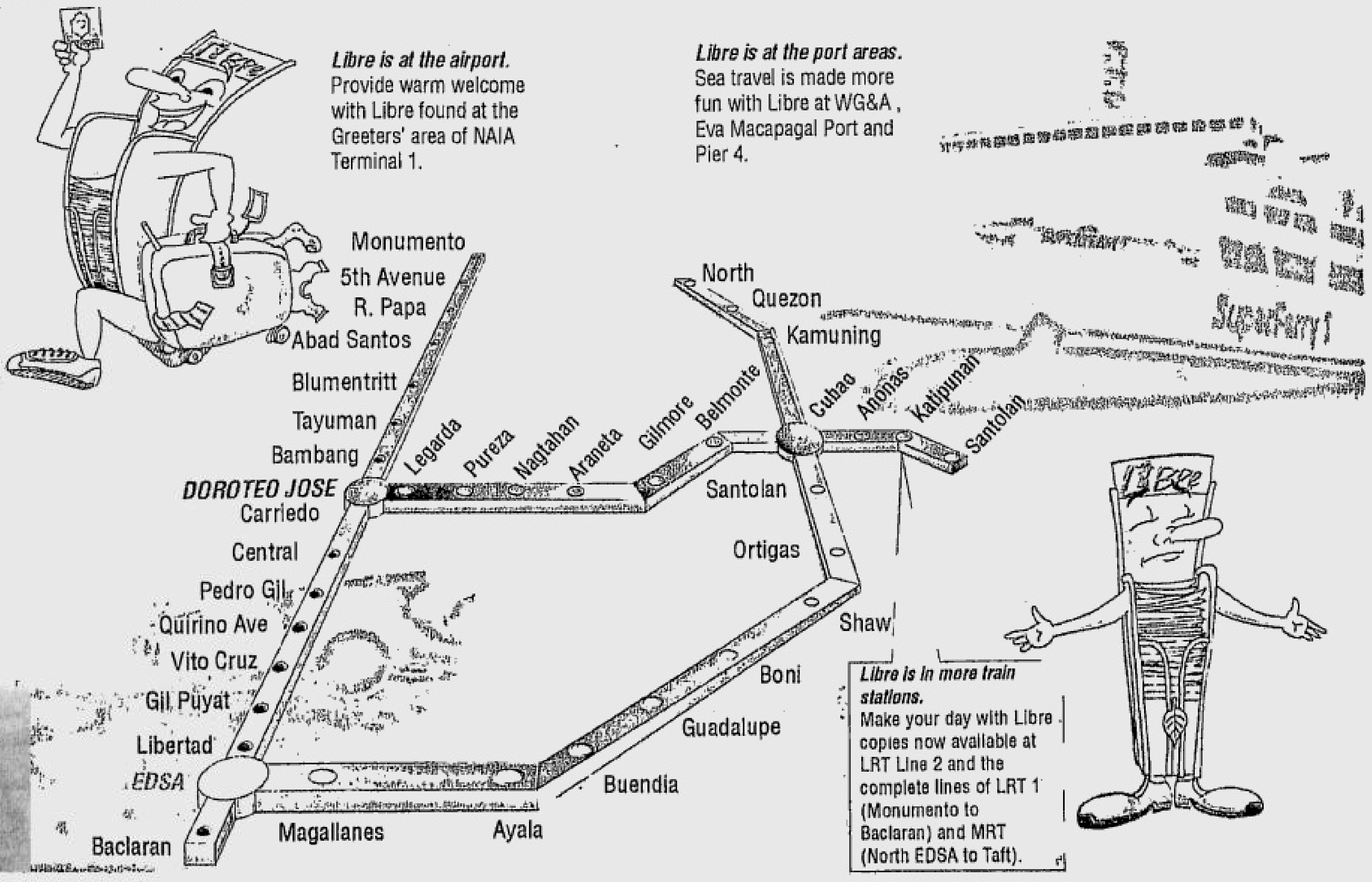
11 p.m.: One wraps up the show with an impromptu closing spiel. One could say hi to anyone in this planet, do whatever one wants, or just smile and say goodbye.

11:20 p.m.: One heads for the "Campus TV" van parked outside so one can do the voice-overs. One tries to get the cell phone numbers right so that viewers can text in their comments.

11:30 p.m.: Finally, it's a wrap!

We're Growing





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Sour note mars proud moment

By Lougee Basabas
2bU! Contributor

"I HAVE five minutes to finish my piece then I shall never hold a microphone again," I reassured myself as I anxiously waited for the keywords that would mark the beginning of my agony.

I felt so unsure of myself and doubted whether the 10 glasses of the ever-so-trusted *salabat* I had had earlier that day would work their wonders.

I was always insecure when it came to singing. I'm really not a born singer, I just don't have the gift. Singing, I thought, would forever be just a fantasy.

"Thank you so much and God bless you all!" Those words rang in my ears as the music came to an end. I saw my competitor giving the crowd a final grand gesture then turning to me and giving me a sarcastic wink, as if daring me to do do better.

It was the cue for me to go up the stage. It was too late to run away. My feet seemed to be glued to the floor. When my name was called, I knew there was no turning back.

I struggled to stand up and forced a smile on my face. Everyone was looking at me as if ready to pass judgment. I walked what seemed like endless steps to the stage, my legs feeling more jelly-like with each stride.

Mental block

I held the microphone tightly with my sweaty palm as I tried to recall the lines of my song. That's when nervousness was at its worst. Everything seemed jumbled up. I began to panic and couldn't believe I forgot the first line of "Looking Through the Eyes of Love" when I spent almost week practicing the stupid song.

The intro was played and I felt so alone that I wanted to cry. I looked for the people who betrayed me by putting me in such situation—my voice trainer, who disappeared all of a sudden, and my mom, who dragged me to the music school. She gave me that "c'mon-and-make-me-proud" look.

My parents actually never thought I could ever sing. When I was a kid, they used to laugh at me each time I belted one of my favorite Madonna songs, "Papa Don't Preach." Everybody used to say that my voice was like that of a moaning cow.

I sang for a children's choir in our parish when I was 11, but I didn't think I contributed to the harmony of the group. I simply went there to check out the cute sacristans.

I couldn't even remember how and when I realized that I had learned to sing. All I could recall was that the teasing eventually stopped and they started asking me to sing in family reunions. My mom became pleased that she enrolled me in a music school in Las Piñas. And there I was, at the final stage of my course—the recital—performing for the very first time in front of a huge crowd.

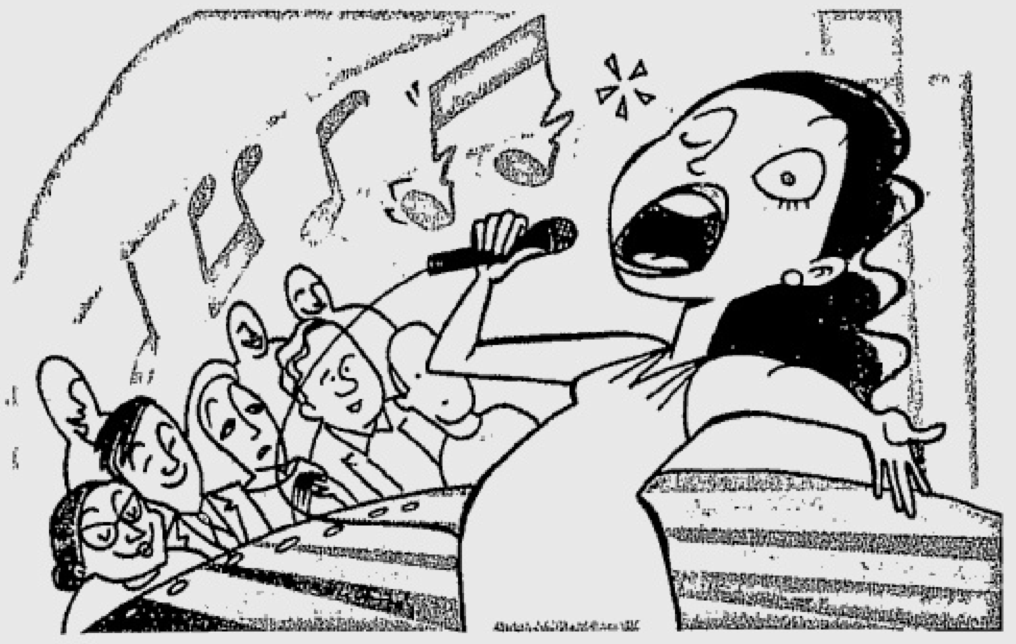
I then realized that I already missed the first three lines of the song. The silence was deafening. I could hear the distorted sound of the minus-one playing. The crowd looked even more intimidating. I tried to catch up though my heart beat like crazy and my stomach started doing a flip-flop.

Gaining confidence

It wasn't until toward the middle of the song that I started to loosen up a bit. I tried to imagine myself singing alone in the shower, not caring. I gradually relaxed and sang the song with conviction. I also grew more and more confident and started to feel like I owned the stage.

But the final part would either make or break my singing career. The crowd became even more silent, anticipating the climax of the song. So sure of myself, I breathed in and delivered "...looking through the eyes...ooof...looooo-a-a-aave..." in a big awful sound that seemed more like a squeal. I sounded like a broken cello. However, although I was so embarrassed, still I held my head high, smiled and bowed.

I ran straight to the comfort room, wanting to die of shame. My mom followed, gave me a big hug and told me how proud she was. My coach finally showed up when I was about to leave. She congratulated me and told me that I would go a long way by simply believing in myself. I couldn't understand at first what made her say that, but I never forgot those words even now.



Although embarrassed, I held my head high, smiled and bowed

THE AUTHOR onstage with Mojofly

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2. Drop entries in designated drop boxes found in supermarkets and groceries nationwide. In order to qualify, entries must be dropped in the draw area where the residence of the participant is located as written in the entries. All entries that are dropped in draw areas outside of a participant's residence as indicated in the entries shall be automatically disqualified.

3. Entries received after cut-off date and non-winning entries will qualify for the succeeding draws, including the grand draw.

4. A consumer may win only once in every draw.

5. Winners will be officially notified via mail, with instructions on how to claim their prizes. Winners will only be considered as official once they receive their notification letters. Prizes not claimed within 60 days after receipt of letter will be forfeited upon approval of BFAD.

6. The organizer's decision, in concurrence with the BFAD, is FINAL.

7. Schedule of draws, areas, deadline of entries, & prizes are as follows:

Draw Dates	Deadline of Entries	Area	No. of Winners	Prize (Tax-free)
1st Preliminary Draw				
Aug. 8	Aug. 1	GMA North Luzon Central Luzon South Luzon 1 South Luzon 2 East Visayas West Visayas North Mindanao South Mindanao	40 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10	₱ 25,000 each
2nd Preliminary Draw				
Sept. 3	Aug. 27	West Visayas	1	₱ 500,000 each
Sept. 7	Aug. 31	East Visayas	1	
Sept. 10	Sept. 3	South Mindanao	1	
Sept. 13	Sept. 6	North Mindanao	1	
Sept. 18	Sept. 11	North Luzon	1	
Sept. 18	Sept. 11	Central Luzon	1	
Sept. 18	Sept. 11	South Luzon 1	1	
Sept. 18	Sept. 11	South Luzon 2	1	
Sept. 21	Sept. 14	GMA	3	
Grand Draw				
October 18	October 4	GMA North Luzon Central Luzon South Luzon 1 South Luzon 2 East Visayas West Visayas North Mindanao South Mindanao	4 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	₱ 1,000,000 each

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"MAG-NESTLÉ ALMUSAL NA! BAKA ISA KA NA SA MGA MAGIGING MILYONARYO!"

Turn into a beach babe for sem break

Lora Gabol

IT TOOK me three weeks to realize it was September. Yes, SeptemBER. While most of you are counting the days till Santa Claus comes to town, this first BER-month signals for me more than the expected drop in temperature.

September also means we can start the countdown to a time for a different kind of fun that doesn't involve Christmas trees and presents. People, it's just a month before sembrreak!

There are only two ways to spend this (sadly) temporary freedom from classrooms, books and "terror" professors: Relive summer fun at the nearest strip of sand or have a "Meteor Garden" marathon and gain 10 pounds. No contest, right? So organize a "posse," get that bod bikini-ready and book the first available flight to Bora/Puerto Galera/Palawan!

But then you realize those group-studies-over-pizza have taken their toll on your thighs. And you just can't force that lazy butt to go overtime at Gold's. So what's a fun-seeking girl to do?

> Before you start worrying about Christmas, think about making the most of the short school vacation

I say run to Rustan's and raid the Phytomer counter!

Shape up

First, you have to get rid of those jiggly thighs and that ripply bum—they just won't look right in an itsy bitsy teenie weenie yellow (hopefully not) polka-dot bikini. Can you do this with a couple of tubes of cream? You bet you can.

ENOUGH with white. Glow in bronze with these products. PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

Phytomer CelluliMask. Don't mistake this for your regular body scrub. It is, amazingly, an Endermologie (if you have moolah to spare, go visit Dr. Vicki Belo for this) session in a bottle. With the best botanicals from the sea, CelluliMask goes deep into the layers of icky fat responsible for cellulite, aka. orange peel skin, and helps drain it for a smoother appearance. Use it on that belly, too, if you really must.

Phytomer BodyDéclic SPF 15. Need help in achieving that elusive 36-24-36 dream figure, but you can only manage to add five extra crunches to your fitness regimen (which consists of five crunches)?

For those with a severe case of exercise *tamad*-itis, you've found your best friend. Slap on a generous dollop of the heavenly scented, non-greasy cream to any area that needs trimming and feel it working to create a slimmer you. Just make sure to massage it thoroughly. You can't be that lazy.

An added plus: The SPF (sun protection factor) content makes it the best bet if you also want to work on a "preliminary" tan while "sleekening" your figure.

CREATES a slimmer you

Tone up

Now that you have taken cared of the silhouette, the next logical step is to boost the firmness of your skin (after the torture of seesawing between weight gain and loss, you'll need it). The SeaTonic Line is bound to be a huge hit with the body-conscious.

SeaTonic Body Firming Cream. The name says it all. Use it regularly in place of your regular lotion and watch your skin's elasticity return. Say hello to supple skin from head to toe! For the *kikay*-to-the-bone girly-girls, you'll love the pink color and the shimmery formula.

SeaTonic Toning Bust Gel. What's the best accessory to a bikini bra? Cleavage, that's what. So genetics did not give you Viva Hot Babe proportions? But if your bosom is ample, you can make the most of it with a gel that tones, tightens and helps lift those boobs! For all-out glam, the cooling gel formula also leaves skin with a subtle sheen, perfect for those décolleté outfits.

TARGETS icky cellulites

SeaTonic Stretch Mark Reducing Cream. I'd be lying if I say my stretch marks don't bother me. Having been a chubby kid, I have had to live with these unsightly marks for quite some time, at least until I discovered this miracle worker from Phytomer (it's undoubtedly my pick from this line). While it does not completely erase stretch marks, it makes them less conspicuous after regular use—enough to eliminate the need to wear a sarong every time you stroll on the beach.

Glow on!

You've worked hard (well, not really) for the figure and the silky complexion, now it's time to maximize your beach babe potential with a gorgeously faux bronze glow.

Phytomer Exfoliating Shower Gel. Before you slather on your tanning lotion, let me remind you that you have to exfoliate first. Don't get too excited and skip this crucial step or you'd have to live with streaky orange skin for the rest of your holiday. Use a shower puff, loofah or your own two hands and scrub those dead skin cells away with this non-abrasive bath buddy.

Phytomer Rapid Self-Tanning Gel. Your grand finale to your beach-prep regimen: A golden tan courtesy of Phytomer Rapid Self-Tanning Gel. How do you think those gorgeous French goddesses get their tan? St. Tropez? Hah!

The only thing you'll love more than your golden glow is the quick drying formula—no more walking around in your birthday suit as you wait for it to dry.

Phytomer Satin-like Body Care. Oops. This is the real grand finale. Add a dose of sexy sheen to your smooth, subtle, coffee-colored skin with this luxurious body oil. Bonus: It comes in a spray bottle—no more messy spills and icky stains.

Phytomer at Rustan's; Phytomer treatments available at The Spa, RCBC Tower.

E-mail the author at pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com

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Gising na!

Birds do it, bees do it but do all celebs do it?

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

IN an industry where booze, dope and extremely tempting beauties and bodies abound, can one stay a virgin until honeymoon night?

Contrary to popular belief, the roles they portray and the images they project, some famous personalities are actually still virgins bent on losing their virginity to the one they love only after marching down the aisle. From abstaining athletes to pure personalities, here are the chaste celebs.

Lisa Kudrow

Everybody knows her as Phoebe, the kinda-off girl who has a porn star twin. Also seen in films like "Hanging Up" and "Analyze This," Lisa remained a virgin until she got married at

BIRDS/ E3

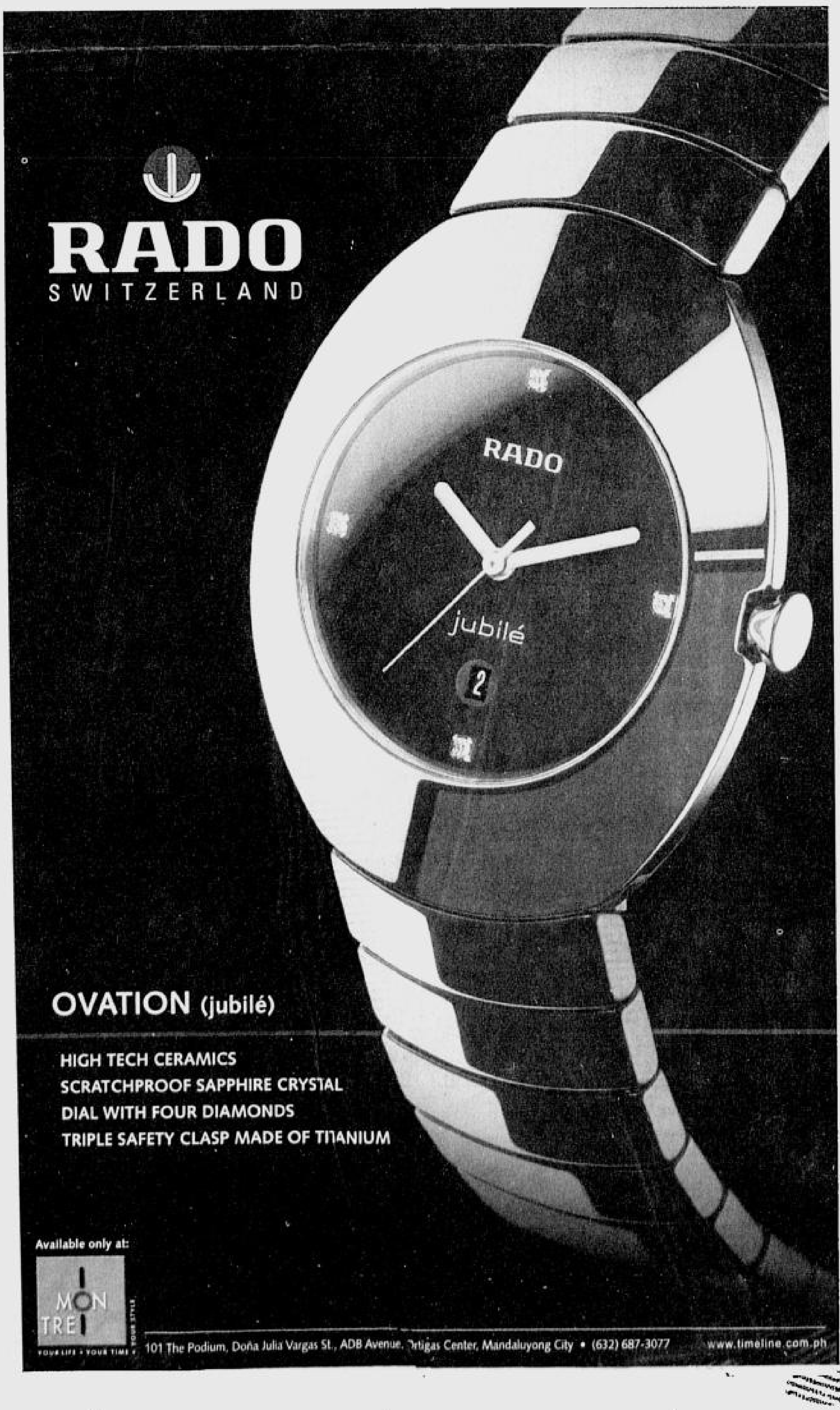
Madonna might have sung 'Like a Virgin' but she's certainly not on this list, which includes Lisa Kudrow, Jessica Simpson and Anna Kournikova

WHAT'S ON at Robinsons

SEX BOMB DANCERS

The afternoon is going to be inspiring at Robinsons Place Dasmariñas! The undisputed queens of dance take the stage for a mini-concert. It's definitely one scintillating afternoon, so don't miss it!

ROBINSONS Place DASMARIÑAS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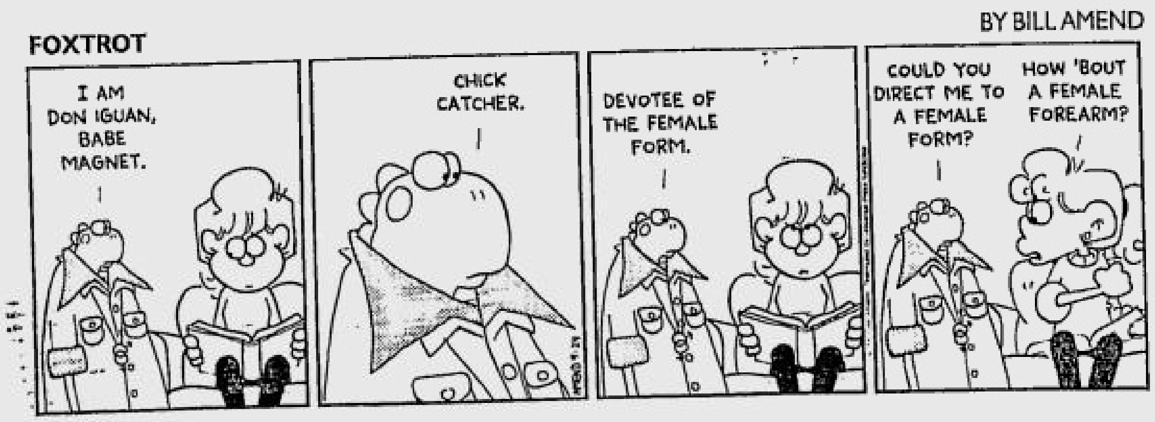
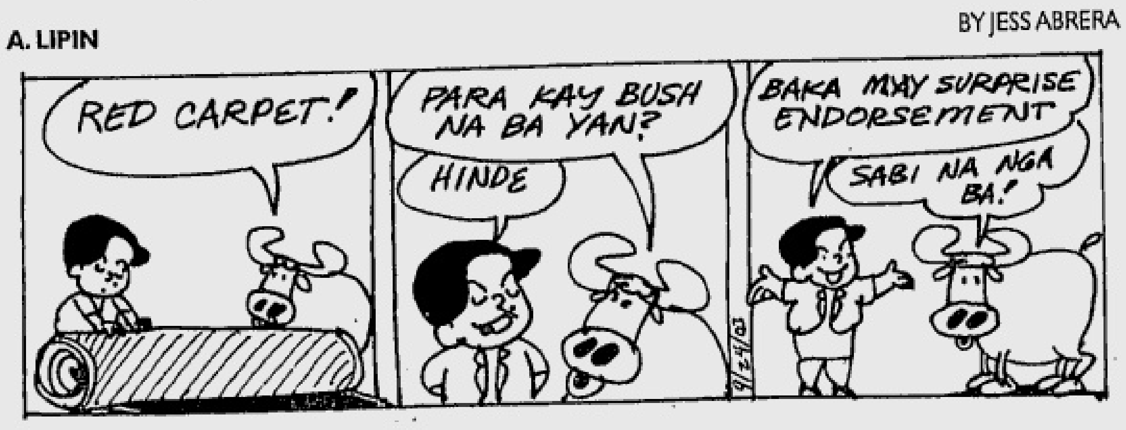
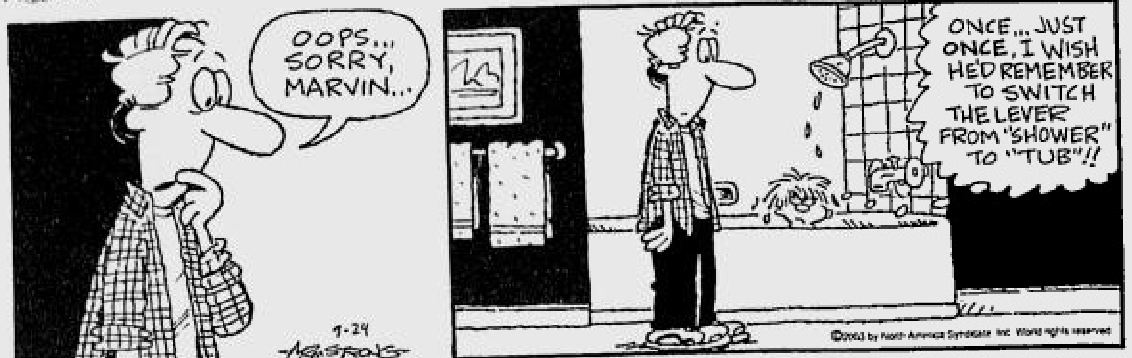
FOXTROT
BY BILL AMEND


I AM DON IGUAN, BABE MAGNET.
CHICK CATCHER.
DEVOTEE OF THE FEMALE FORM.
COULD YOU DIRECT ME TO A FEMALE FORM?
HOW 'BOUT A FEMALE FOREARM?

A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


RED CARPET!
PARA KAY BUSH NA BA YAN?
HINDE
BAKA MAY SURPRISE ENDORSEMENT
SABI NA NGA BA!
9/24/03

MARVIN
BY TOM ARMSTRONG


OOPS... SORRY, MARVIN...
9-24
ARMSTRONG
ONCE... JUST ONCE, I WISH HE'D REMEMBER TO SWITCH THE LEVER FROM "SHOWER" TO "TUB"!!
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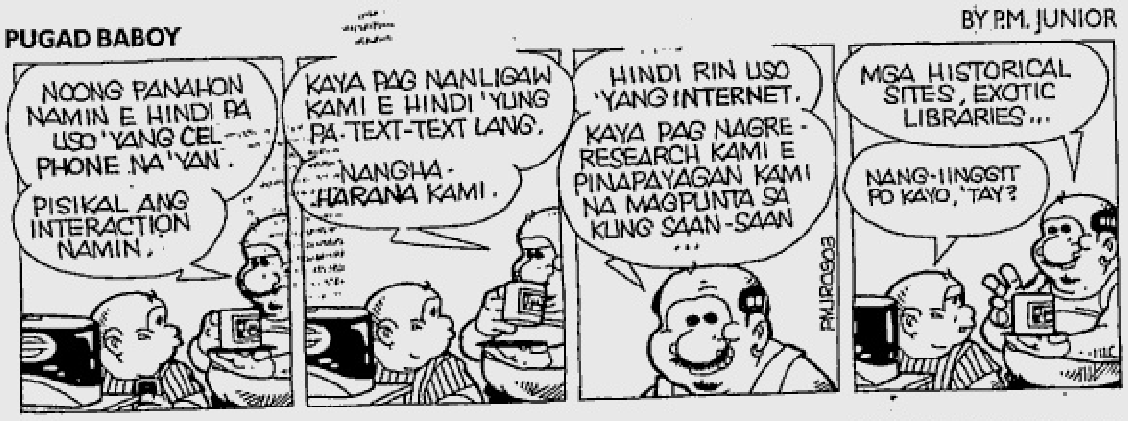
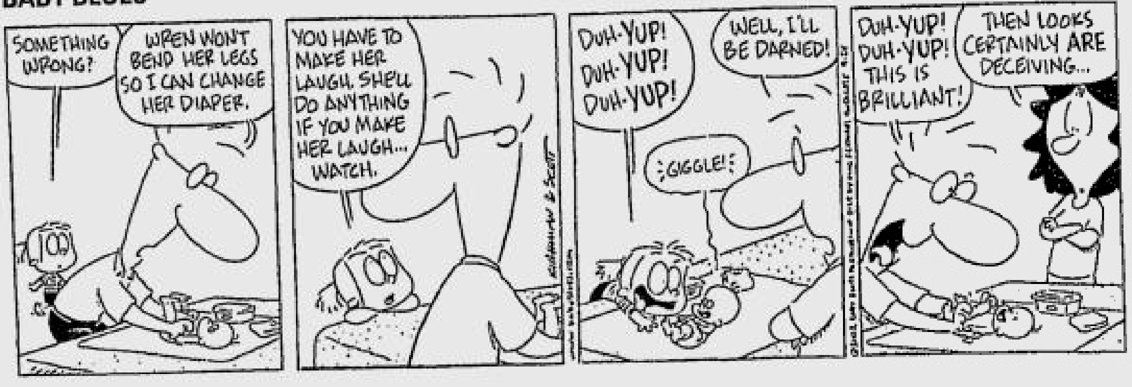
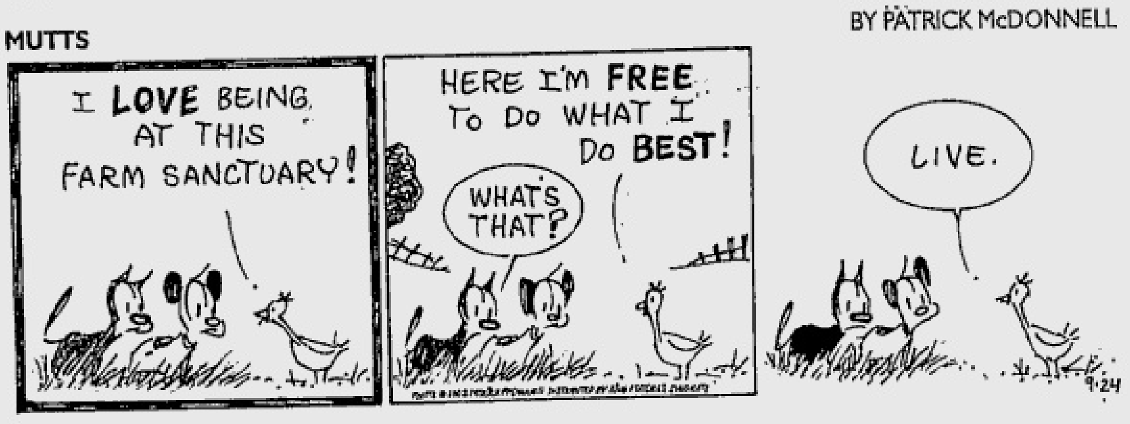
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


NOONG PANAHON NAMIN E HINDI PA USO 'YANG CELPHONE NA 'YAN.
PISIKAL ANG INTERACTION NAMIN.
KAYA PAG NANLIGAW KAMI E HINDI 'YUNG PA-TEXT-TEXT LANG.
NANGHAHARANA KAMI.
HINDI RIN USO 'YANG INTERNET.
KAYA PAG NAGRE-RESEARCH KAMI E PINAPAYAGAN KAMI NA MAGPUNTA SA KUNG SAAN-SAAN...
PMJR0903
MGA HISTORICAL SITES, EXOTIC LIBRARIES...
NANG-IINGGIT PO KAYO, 'TAY?

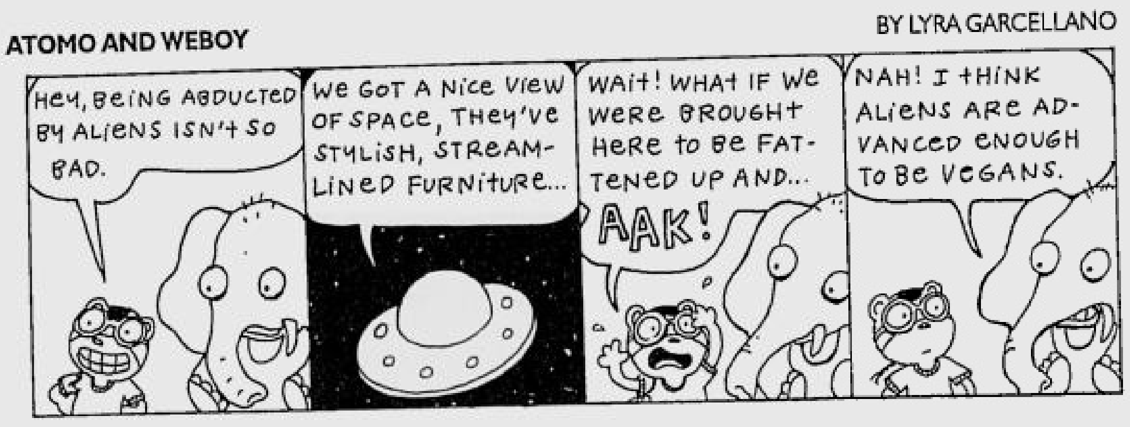
BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


SOMETHING WRONG?
WREN WON'T BEND HER LEGS SO I CAN CHANGE HER DIAPER.
YOU HAVE TO MAKE HER LAUGH. SHE'LL DO ANYTHING IF YOU MAKE HER LAUGH... WATCH.
DUH-YUP! DUH-YUP! DUH-YUP!
GIGGLE!
WELL, I'LL BE DARNED!
DUH-YUP! DUH-YUP! THIS IS BRILLIANT!
THEN LOOKS CERTAINLY ARE DECEIVING...

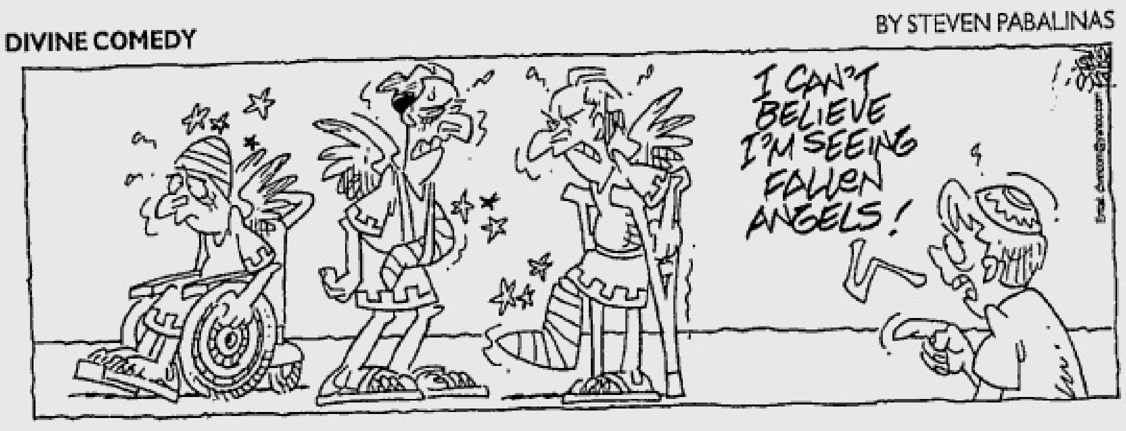
MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I LOVE BEING AT THIS FARM SANCTUARY!
HERE I'M FREE TO DO WHAT I DO BEST!
WHAT'S THAT?
LIVE.
9-24

ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, BEING ABDUCTED BY ALIENS ISN'T SO BAD.
WE GOT A NICE VIEW OF SPACE, THEY'VE STYLISH, STREAMLINED FURNITURE...
WAIT! WHAT IF WE WERE BROUGHT HERE TO BE FATTENED UP AND...
AAK!
NAH! I THINK ALIENS ARE ADVANCED ENOUGH TO BE VEGANS.

DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M SEEING FALLEN ANGELS!

HOROSCOPE
BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a vivid imagination. At heart, you are a wanderer—a seeker. You want the answers to all the big questions. You also want to see how others live. You love to read, think, dream and travel. Expect to focus on your closest relationships and partnerships this year.
Birthdate of: Gordon Clapp, actor; Kevin Sorbo, actor; F. Scott Fitzgerald, writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): For the next four weeks, you can learn more than usual through your dealings with others. Partners and close friends will act like a mirror for you to see yourself in.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Suddenly, you are overwhelmed with a desire to get better organized both at work and at home. This wonderful feeling lasts for about a month.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The next four weeks promise fun, amusing diversions, entertaining times, romance and love affairs, plus playful activities with children. You are the lucky one!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Expect to focus on home and family more than usual now and in the next few weeks. Family get-togethers, redecorating and enjoying cozy times at home are tops on your list.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is not a time to stay at home. In the next few weeks you will be busy with appointments, short trips and lots of running around. Expect to be shopping more than usual. Start gearing up for this.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your mind turns to finances, shopping and how to earn more money now. You want to feel better about yourself through your possessions or what you do with your earnings.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Sun is in your sign now, dear Libra. This means that for the next four weeks, it's all about you. It's your time to re-energize, restore and replenish yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You need more peace and quiet. Do anything to steal a little time just for yourself. You are best off working in the background or behind the scenes for the next month.

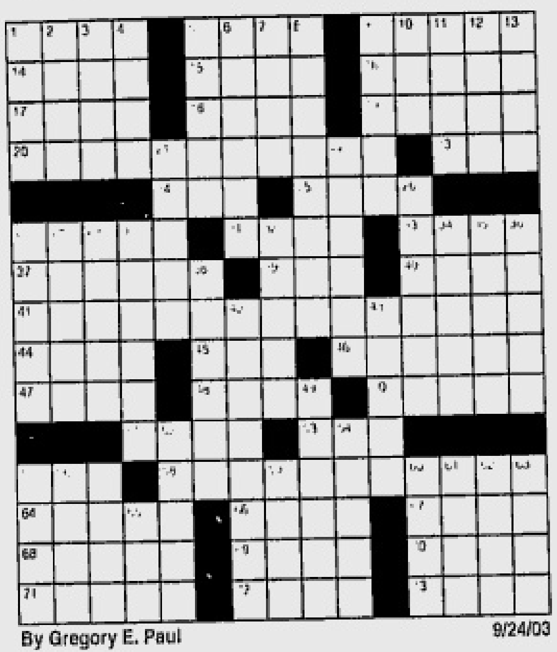
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Life is getting social! In the next few weeks, you will be seeing friends more than usual. You will also be involved with clubs, organizations and groups.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): No doubt, you are going to be singled out for something special now. People will notice you in the next few weeks. Don't be afraid to accept new responsibilities.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Everything having to do with higher education, publishing, foreign countries and other cultures becomes increasingly important now. Expect to be active in these areas.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The month ahead is a great time for research. (Personally, you feel unusually passionate.) Others might give you gifts or do favors for you now. Yay!

DAILY CROSSWORD

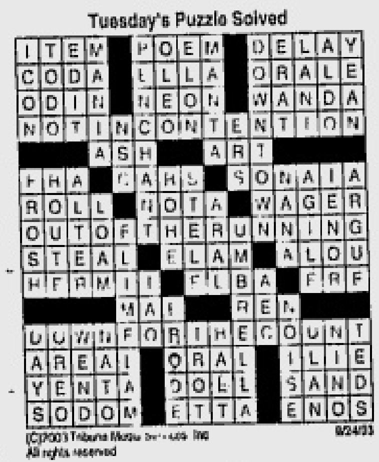


By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA
9/24/03

ACROSS
1 __ van der Rohe
5 Play divisions
9 Chicago eleven
14 A single time
15 Eeyore's friend
16 Think alike
17 Square measure
18 Japanese wrestling
19 Bottom line
20 Raid on Entebbe operation
23 Sprite
24 Shuttle destination: abbr.
25 Piano parts
27 Indian or Atlantic
31 Black, to Byron
33 Apiece
37 Picked up furtively
39 Alien craft: abbr.
40 Doozy
41 War on Terrorism operation
44 Christmas song
45 "_ Joey"
46 Pacific weather phenomenon
47 Very dry
48 Seer's sign
50 Procrastinator's word
51 Mosaic piece
53 "Born in the _"
55 Unrefined
58 Gulf War operation
64 Put up with
66 And
67 "Typee" sequel
68 Communication services
69 Avid
70 Closed hand
71 Girder stuff
72 Relax
73 Western state

DOWN
1 Castle ditch
2 Short distance
3 Cream shade
4 Viewed
5 Church parts
6 Intended route
7 Burial chamber
8 Gave the slip to
9 Insane
10 Self-image
11 Comic Johnson
12 Authentic
13 Braggart's concern
21 Place for eats
22 "The Raven" lady
26 Tejano star
27 Bids first
28 Tippy craft
29 Mormon leader
30 Talisman
32 Taps horn
34 Accounts inspection
35 Dolly the sheep, e.g.
36 Wit
38 Pair of opposite charges
42 Junior, to senior
43 Raines and Logan
49 Hospital workers
52 Perfect
54 Boulder
55 Ewes' males
56 Act as a lookout, e.g.
57 Expansive
59 Zeno's home
60 Vegetarian's staple
61 Leave out
62 Ponselle or Parks
63 Closet eater?
65 Gambling cube

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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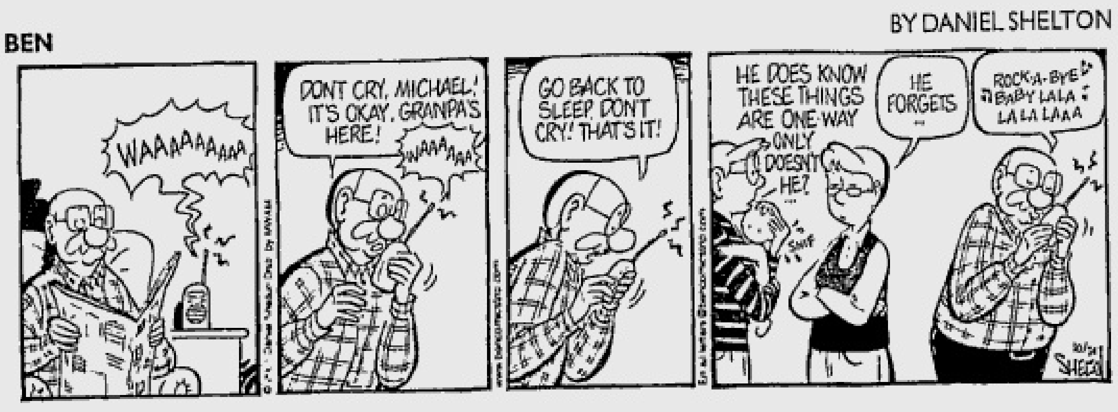
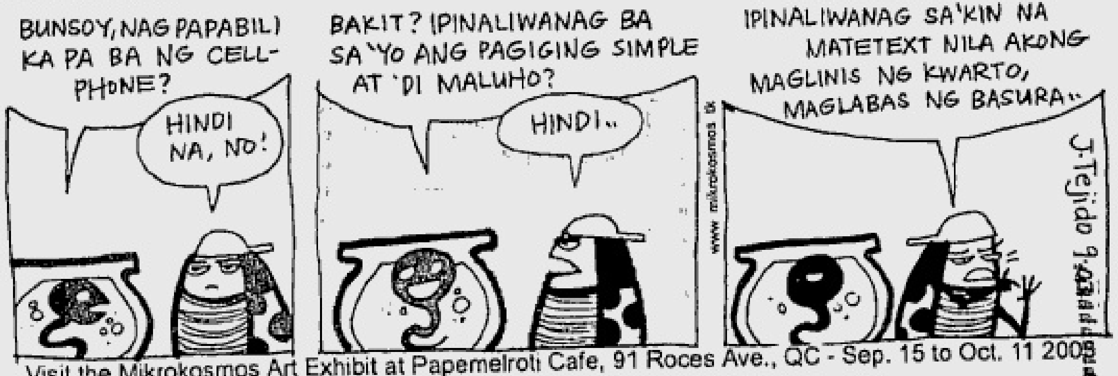
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON

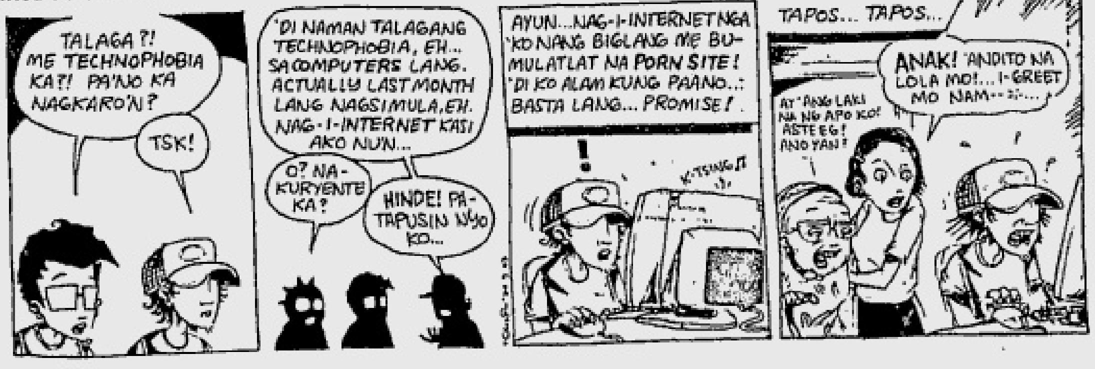

WAAAAAAAAA
DONT CRY, MICHAEL! IT'S OKAY, GRANPA'S HERE!
WAAAAAAA
GO BACK TO SLEEP DONT CRY! THAT'S IT!
HE DOES KNOW THESE THINGS ARE ONE-WAY ONLY DOESN'T HE?
HE FORGETS
ROCK-A-BYE BABY LALA LALA LAAA

MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

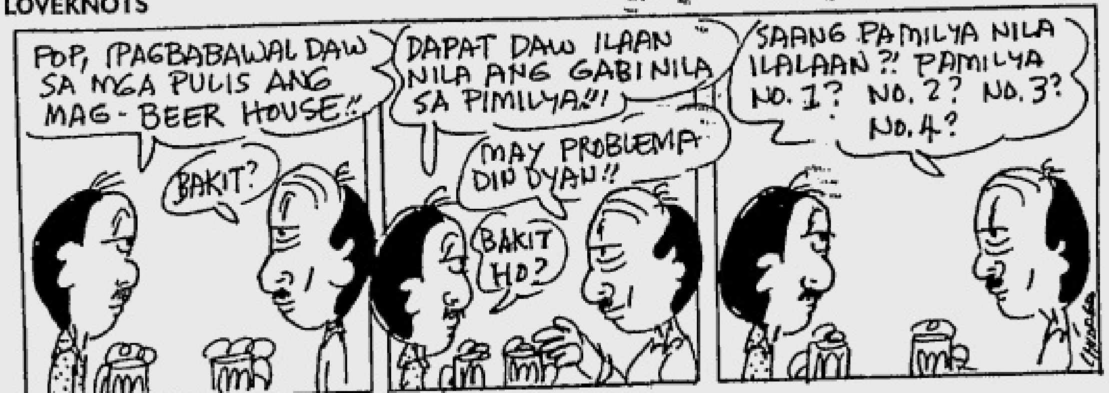

BUNSOY, NAG PAPABILI KA PA BA NG CELLPHONE?
HINDI NA, NO!
BAKIT? IPINALIWANAG BA SA 'YO ANG PAGIGING SIMPLE AT 'DI MALUHO?
HINDI..
IPINALIWANAG SA'KIN NA MATETEXT NILA AKONG MAGLINIS NG KWARTO, MAGLABAS NG BASURA..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J.Tejido

Visit the Mikrokosmos Art Exhibit at Papemelroti Cafe, 91 Roces Ave., QC - Sep. 15 to Oct. 11 2003

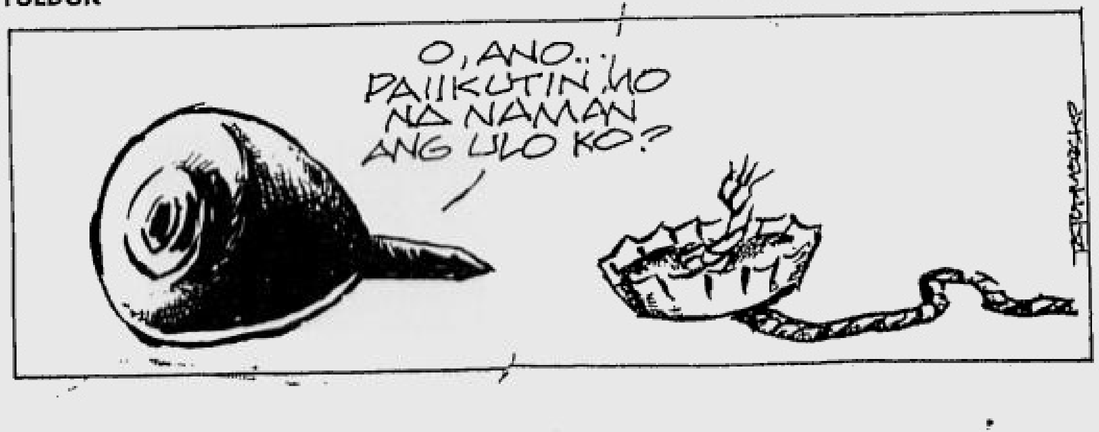
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


TALAGA?! ME TECHNOPHOBIA KA?! PA'NO KA NAGKARO'N?
TSK!
'DI NAMAN TALAGANG TECHNOPHOBIA, EH... SA COMPUTERS LANG. ACTUALLY LAST MONTH LANG NAGSIMULA, EH. NAG-I-INTERNET KASI AKO NUN...
O? NAKURYENTE KA?
HINDE! PATAPUSIN NYO KO...
AYUN...NAG-I-INTERNET NGA 'KO NANG BIGLANG ME BUMULATLAT NA PORN SITE! 'DI KO ALAM KUNG PAANO..: BASTA LANG... PROMISE!
K-TSING!
TAPOS... TAPOS...
AT 'ANG LAKI NA NG APO KO! ASTEEG! ANO YAN?
ANAK! ANDITO NA LOLA MO!... I-GREET MO NAM...

LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


POP, IPAGBABAWAL DAW SA MGA PULIS ANG MAG-BEER HOUSE!!
BAKIT?
DAPAT DAW ILAAN NILA ANG GABI NILA SA PAMILYA!!
MAY PROBLEMA DIN DYAN!!
BAKIT HO?
SAANG PAMILYA NILA ILALAAN?! PAMILYA NO. 1? NO. 2? NO. 3? NO. 4?
CHIONGLO

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


O, ANO... PAIIKUTIN MO NA NAMAN ANG ULO KO?

Birds do it, bees do it but do all celebs do it?

From page E1

the age of 31 saying, "My virginity was something I had decided was very precious, something that I owned to give away."

Jessica Simpson

Despite her sometimes-suggestive lyrics and sexy image onscreen, Jessica Simpson speaks openly about abstinence and encourages her fans to follow God's plan for their lives. Having performed at "True Love Waits" events, Jessica insists that her wedding gift "will be a heck of a lot more valuable than a big-screen TV." I guess hubby Nick Lachey can't be happier.

A.C. Green

Forward A.C. Green is formerly one of the Los Angeles Lakers' key players. Strongly believing in abstinence, he speaks often at schools and has established the A.C. Green Foundation to promote abstinence education among kids and teens with raging hormones.

Brendan Fehr

The "Roswell" star has the support of his fans who actually think it's cool that he's choosing to remain a virgin. Even his on- and off-screen love interest, Majandra Delfino, says, "I love being a virgin, too."

Jonathan Jackson

The former "General Hospital" hottie hasn't had sex, believing in putting "God before self."

Leelee Sobieski

Known for starring in "Deep Impact," and also for playing Joan of Arc in a CBS TV miniseries in 1999, this actress may, be hot but she's not giving in to the heat.

Enrique Iglesias

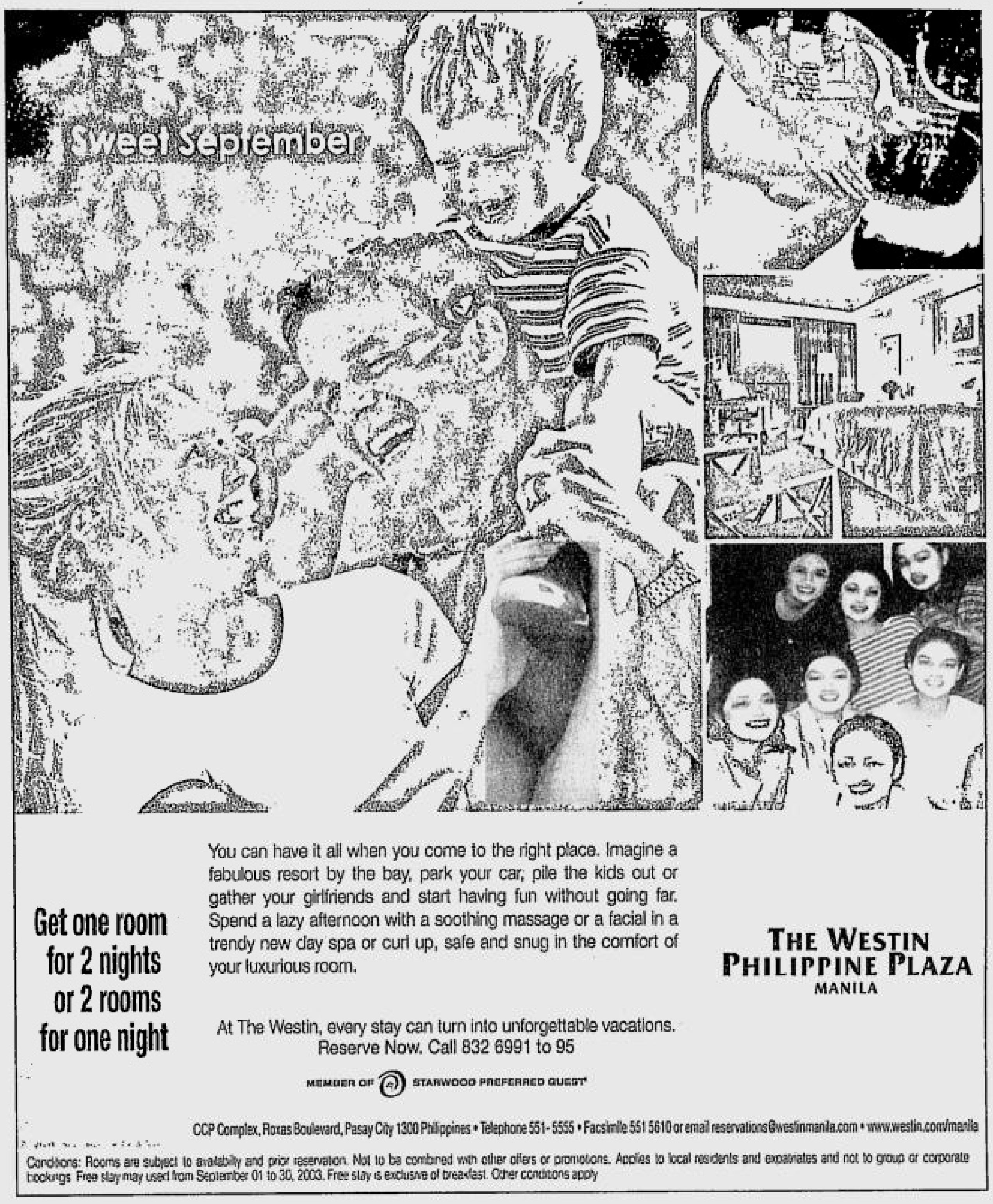
Having suffered from maternal and paternal abandonment, he wants to spare his future kids from the same fate. Enrique, with his pretty stimulating videos and sexy songs, has surprised everybody with his decision to wait until marriage. He may be too hot to handle in his videos but, he says, "I am a virgin and I want to remain like this until marriage, and when you mention it, please don't joke."

Anna Kournikova

The world-famous tennis star from Russia says she's a virgin. And we see her playing tonsil-hockey with fellow virgin Enrique Iglesias in one of his videos.

Whether what these celebrities say is true or not, remaining a virgin until marriage is a personal choice and should remain so. But give it to these guys for chucking privacy and using their fame and power to influence the young ones to do what they think is right.

E-mail the virginal author at katotino@yahoo.com



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Strike one

A correspondent shares how the section has impaled and impregnated him with firsts

By Niño Mark Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

2BU! is so far the greatest thing that has ever happened to me.

I have always been a regular reader of the section, and the moment I saw a little ad that said the section was looking for new correspondents, my heart skipped a beat and elephants played hopscotch on my chest.

Writing has always been a vice, an indulgence and a passion for me. Although the most I could boast of by way of credentials was my mere stint as the editor in chief of our high school paper, I knew I just had to try out and show the INQUIRER my best.

And so I went to the PDI office armed with sheets of my ramblings and a resume that didn't say much. There was an interview by sets, and after mouthing applause-inducing beauty pageant answers, we were told to go home and patiently wait for the issue that would bear the names of the new correspondents.

Each day waiting for D-Day was extreme torture.

Paranoia, uncertainty and insecurity were constant companions. The night before the day of truth was worse. I tossed and turned to the point of losing sleep. But I still managed to wake up extra early to buy myself a copy of the day's paper.

Getting in

With trembling hands (and Dumbo once again on my chest), I thumbed through the papers in search of the announcement and somehow, someway, I saw my name as if it were boldfaced, underlined and italicized. Seeing my name on a daily's page froze me and at the same time made me feel like gelatin. It sank in so slowly, with me checking and re-checking every letter of my name, before the reality finally, totally dawned on me. There was no doubt it was one of the greatest revelations in my life and I'm just so thankful.

And then came the first-ever meeting. It was scary and intimidating to be in the company of seemingly rich, smart and perfect beings. I felt like a *probinsyano* among these well-traveled and well-experienced urbanites. Eventually, the getting-to-know-yous melted the iceberg and everybody had fun brainstorming for the upcoming issues.

Seeing my first-ever article was undoubtedly special and memorable. There were the usual lack of sleep due to excessive tossing and turning, the trembling of hands and the elephants on my chest.

Seeing my piece and my name (and finding out that I didn't get butchered) was like seeing my perfect firstborn slip out of her mother that I wanted to cry like Maybelyn dela Cruz and perform cartwheels with one hand.

From then on, I would spend every Wednesday morning waking up early to check on the papers. I would hop out of the bed as early as 4:30 a.m. and pace the whole garage in anticipation of the day's paper.

The main reason for all the uneasiness is the fact that writing something for the section doesn't automatically mean that you'd get printed.

Aside from the paper's standards and space, there are also other correspondents who are vying for space, which almost always turns out to be little (to those who don't get printed, at least).

Bagging the advice column was also a first for me. It was like my first-ever promotion. And the thought of seeing my face on the papers on a weekly basis made attention-deprived, egotistic me hide a grin.

2bU! has continued to bless me with other firsts. My first-ever plane ride when I was assigned to check out Dos Palmas in Palawan. My first-ever trip to Boracay (which was only recently, poor me, I know). My first-ever time to go snorkeling and scuba-diving (both traumatic). My first-ever fan mail. And hate mail.

I know 2bU! and life in general has a lot of seconds and thirds lined up for me. But what I greatly anticipate and am eternally grateful for are the other special, photo album and blog-worthy firsts still coming my way.

They made it!

THE FOLLOWING applicants made it to the second stage of the screening for new 2bU! correspondents:

Cristina Agatep
Samantha Ang
Jeffrey D. Batac
Jeffrey Pe Benito
Sally May Bolivar
Pauline Buenaventura
Patrick Cabalu
Marla Cabanban
Karen Anne Canasa
Simon Cervantes
Angelo Comsti
Bianca Consunji
Mitzie Correa
Katrina Denoga
Vanessa Arellano Doctor
Janellee Dumanat
Adrian M. Dy
Ma. Carissa Bianca D. Francisco
Lyra Abueg Garcellano
Russell Stanley Q. Geronimo
Carren Jao
Jason Javier
Joshua Liao
Denise Libuo
Adrian C. Lim
Kris Lim
Jonas S. Lopez
Francis Manzano
Sam Marcelo
Danicar D. Mariano
Jay Mata
Marla Miniano
Glenn O. Mugas
Rowena Ellen Ong
John Claude Pagdanganan
Francine Palines
Jose Benjamin Perez
Mary Anne Tan Perez
Maria Carmina Ramos
Katrina Ramos
Vincent C. Sales
Brian Keith Santos
Michael Joseph Semira
Cris Silva
Bernice Herrera Sy
Nestor Aldwin Tio
Genevieve Tiu
Linus Velasco Tiu
JR Victorio
Katrina Anne Yap
Jonathan Roque Yu

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Lakas threatened with 3-way split over '04 candidate

Story on PAGE A2

Ermita lauded: More civilian than military

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

WITH Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita at the helm of the defense department, there will be peace within the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Thus, predicted Sen. Joker Arroyo as he joined other lawmakers in welcoming

ERMITA/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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website: www.inq7.net

Reality TV reinvented

By Louie Camino and Marinel Cruz

KRIS Aquino is the newest, biggest star of Philippine reality TV.

Prime time newscasts last night went overtime, families and offices dropped their chores and stopped, watched and listened as an outraged Aquino addressed "the whole Philippines" and for the first time told all about her latest, and apparently most violent, quarrel with Parañaque City Mayor

REALITY/ A4

Kris: Gun brought back memories of dad

By Louie Camino, Alcuin Papa, Marinel Cruz and Nini Valera

IT WAS not the first time that actress and TV host Kris Aquino had been hurt and bruised in a quarrel with her lover, Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez, sources close to the Aquinos told the INQUIRER.

Around "July or August," the sources said, Kris was absent several times from her TV shows,"Morning Girls" and "The Buzz" because "she had bruises all over the body."

"But she did not complain," one source said. "She did not go running to her mom. What triggered her talking this time was the gun."

Through her lawyers, Kris had alleged that Marquez had cocked and pointed a 9 mm pistol at her on Monday night at the height of their heated argument inside a condo unit at the Essensa in Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

Following the incident while she was on her way to her mother's house, Kris kept repeating, "*Namatay ang* daddy *ko sa baril*. It was a gun that killed my father. Do you understand?" according to the sources.

Kris referred to the Marcos arch rival, opposition Sen. Benigno Aquino, who was gunned down at the Manila International Airport upon arrival from a three-year exile in the US.

But Kris was not crying, although the TV host and actress was "very angry and *tulala*," said one source.

At the Times Street home in Quezon City of her mother, former President Cory Aquino told her daughter,

KRIS/ A8

PAINED on raw reality TV. "He didn't respect my right to live when he pointed a gun at me. Until now I can still hear the gun being cocked, and I tremble." PHOTO GRAB FROM ABS-CBN'S TV PATROL

True confessions and dirty laundry on national TV

By Lito Zulueta

IT WAS a double-treat soap opera with all the dirty laundry hung dripping and soggy for the entire world to gawk at.

For almost an hour last night, Kris Aquino held back regular programming of network giant ABS-CBN as she related over the prime-time newscast "TV Patrol" a sordid tale of womanizing, battering, psychological abuse, and even sexually transmitted disease.

Meanwhile, on the rival network GMA-7's "Frontpage", Joey Marquez related a sordid tale of man-eating, battering, psychological abuse, and, had the programming gone on to match ABS-CBN's, measure for measure, per-

TRUE/ A8

GMA rating at its lowest

Palace blames Lacson's 'Jose Pidal' exposé

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE JOSE Pidal exposé of opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson against the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo has dragged the President's public approval rating to its all-time low, Malacañang admitted yesterday.

Malacañang made the admission after Pulse Asia reported the results of a nationwide survey the polling firm conducted from Aug. 28 to Sept. 10, when the nation was abuzz with the controversial charges made by Lacson in his privilege speeches on Aug. 18 and Sept. 1.

"Practically all the gains she has made in public approval and trust during and immediately after the Oakwood military mutiny now appear to have dissipated, with her current approval and trust ratings being even marginally lower than she registered in quarterly Pulse Asia surveys between March 2001 and April 2003," Pulse Asia research director Felipe Miranda said in a statement.

Public approval for the President dropped 10 points, from a national support level of 51 percent in August to 41 percent this month, said Pulse Asia, which released the survey results hours before the President left last night for a five-day trip to the United States and Europe, her longest overseas trip since she quelled the July 27 Oakwood mutiny.

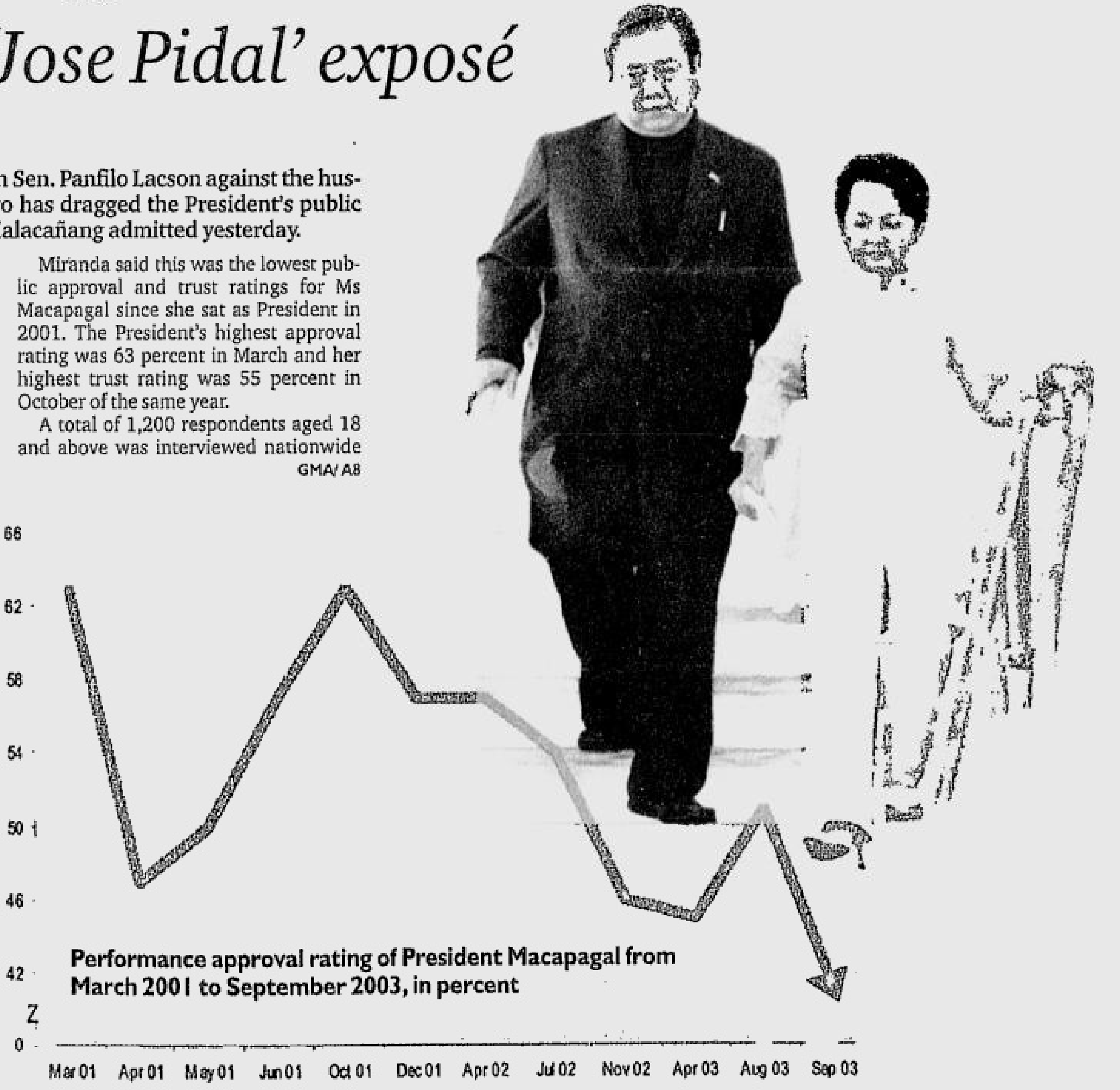
Her trust rating dropped eight points from 44 percent to 36 percent during the period.

As a result, the President's "net approval level dropped from +28 to +14 while her net trust level decreased from +19 to a single digit +7," Miranda said. (Net approval rating is the difference between the percentage of respondents who approve of the President's performance and the percentage of those who do not.)

Miranda said this was the lowest public approval and trust ratings for Ms Macapagal since she sat as President in 2001. The President's highest approval rating was 63 percent in March and her highest trust rating was 55 percent in October of the same year.

A total of 1,200 respondents aged 18 and above was interviewed nationwide

GMA/ A8



Performance approval rating of President Macapagal from March 2001 to September 2003, in percent

Bar examinees protest trauma, extra cost, time

BAR examinees who have to re-take an exam on Mercantile Law on Oct. 4 are protesting the extra expense they will incur as a result of the additional testing day.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the leak in the subject in the bar examination last Sunday was "shameful" and a "grave threat" to the country's justice system.

"Cheating is a bad ticket to the law profession. I am appalled that would-be lawyers are capable, or can get away, with such dishonesty. This is a grave threat to the integrity of our system of justice," Ms Macapagal said in a statement.

The President said the Supreme Court made the right decision in nullifying last Sunday's exam on Mercantile Law.

"We hope that the people responsible for the leak are identified and charged," Ms Macapagal said.

She called for the implementation of "more stringent measures to prevent a recurrence of the shameful incident."

The political party Social Justice Society meanwhile asked the SC to give bar examinees a "25-percent bonus" in their Oct. 4 exam.

"Since the examinees are being made to undergo an additional tedious and trau-

BAR/ A6

PARA KAYONG MGA BATA!

'Iskul Bukol' at DepEd

By Dona Pazzibugan

IT was a scene straight out of an "Iskul Bukol" classroom spoof.

At a press briefing at the education department yesterday, Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus was in the middle of a tirade directed against a reporter who had written about his supposedly "harsh"

ISKUL/ A9

Businessmen sharply divided on GMA '04 bid

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

A FORMER governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday warned that President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to keep the public guessing on her plans for 2004 had exacerbated the prevailing political turmoil.

Jose Cuisia, now chair of the Philippine American Life Insurance Co., said the President's coy stance vis a vis her plans had created an uncertainty that was dragging down the economy and discouraging the flow of investments.

Cuisia said this uncertainty could be banished only if Ms Macapagal made known her political plans.

Cuisia said businessmen were sharply divided on whether the President should seek a full six-year term in 2004.

But a number of businessmen, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that given the rising unemployment, slowing economic growth, increasing number of kidnappings and bank robberies, and growing discontent in the military, Ms Macapagal should stick by her Dec. 30 declaration that she would not stand for election next year.

A president of one of the country's biggest universal banks told the INQUIRER that most of his peers were looking to the 2004 elections as an opportunity to make a fresh start in the government and the economy.

This fresh start means having a new face in Malacañang, he said.

The banker said the events of the last three months—the mutiny staged by the

BUSINESSMEN/ A6

Lakas threatened with 3-way split over 2004 bet

By Carlito Pablo, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Cynthia D. Balana

THE RULING Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats is threatened with a three-way split over the issue of its standard-bearer in 2004.

Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras yesterday declared that he and "at least" 39 other Lakas congressmen were sticking with businessman and projected aspirant Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

In a separate interview, Negros Occidental Rep. Apolinario Lozada Jr. said he and nine others "more or less" would support the candidacy of Raul Roco, a former senator and education secretary. Paras confirmed that there was such a faction in Lakas rooting for Roco.

By Lozada's count, 82-86 members of the House of Representatives are members of Lakas, which is co-chaired by President Macapagal-Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia.

With the possible breakaway of some 50 congressmen, only about 30 would remain in the camp of the President, who said she is currently seeking divine guidance in deciding whether she would stand for election next year.

But according to a source who asked not to be named, a Macapagal candidacy in 2004 is "101 percent" sure.

The source said the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, confirmed this to Bro. Eddie Villanueva of the Jesus is Lord movement Monday night during a meeting at which five other government officials were present.

Jose Ma. Rufino, political liaison officer of Ms Macapagal, said he would advise her to make her decision known immediately

LAKAS/ A6

Second FRONT PAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Northern Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/09/25/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

NPA denies slay plot on Bush

YOU ARE NOT WELCOME MR. BUSH!
-AKBAYAN-

PROTESTER in Darna suit prepares for Bush "unwelcome."

JOAN BONDOC

COMMUNIST rebels yesterday denied plans to assassinate US President George W. Bush when he visits Manila next month.

In a statement, the Communist Party of the Philippines said that it was "fantastic—actually ridiculous, to say the least—for the CPP to even bother about assassinating Bush."

"While Bush may have long deserved the death sentence for his reprehensible crimes against people and nations all across the globe... the revolutionary movement has no immediate interest nor actual plan to kill him," the CPP statement said.

Intelligence sources earlier said that the New People's Army (NPA), the CPP's armed wing, was planning to kill Bush during his eight-hour visit to the country on Oct. 18. *AFP report*

Erap lawyer told: Behave or else...

By Philip C. Tubeza

APPARENTLY irked by his legal antics, the Supreme Court has threatened to impose sanctions on Alan Paguia, the lawyer of former President Joseph Estrada, for conduct unbecoming of a lawyer and an officer of the court.

The high court gave Paguia 10 days to explain why he should not be sanctioned for his misconduct.

The SC said that as early as July 8 it had already "strongly warned" Paguia to stop his legal antics. "But unmindful of the well-meant admonition to him by the Court, Attorney Paguia appears to persist no end," the SC said.

The high tribunal said that "criticism or comment made in good faith" on its rulings are welcome but noted that Paguia continues to question the SC decision that legitimized the Macapagal administration after the Edsa II revolt in January 2001.

"The ruling in Estrada v. Arroyo, being a final judgement, has long put to end any question pertaining to the legality of the ascension of Arroyo into the presidency. By reviving the issue of the validity of the assumption of Mme. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency, Attorney Paguia is vainly seeking to breathe life into the carcass of a long dead issue," the SC said.

PAGUIA

It also noted that Paguia has not limited his discussion to the merits of Estrada's case "within the judicial forum." "He has repeated his assault on the Court in both broadcast and print media," the SC said.

It reminded Paguia that Rule 13.02 of the Code of Professional Responsibility prohibits a member of the bar from making "such public statements on any pending case tending to arouse public opinion for or against a party."

"By his acts, Attorney Paguia may have stoked the fires of public dissension and posed a potentially dangerous threat to the administration of justice," the SC said.

It also noted that Paguia even wrote Davide and Panganiban on June 30 and demanded "in a clearly disguised form of forum shopping" for several advisory opinions on matters pending before the Sandiganbayan.

It was this letter that led the SC to "strongly warn" Paguia, "on pain of disciplinary action, to desist from further making, directly or indirectly, similar submissions to this Court or to its Members."

In a nine-page resolution, the SC also dismissed Paguia's petition for certiorari, which asked the tribunal to dismiss the criminal charges against Estrada before the Sandiganbayan.

In his petition, Paguia also asked Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and all the 14 other SC justices to disqualify themselves from hearing and deciding on the petition.

It also asked the SC to reverse Sandiganbayan's adverse rulings on Paguia's motions to dismiss the charges against Estrada, for the justices of the anti-graft court to disqualify themselves because they were allegedly biased, and for the the anti-graft court to inquire into the controversial book "Reforming the Judiciary" of SC Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban.

In its resolution, SC dismissed Paguia's petition for gross insufficiency in substance and for utter lack of merit.

The high court also argued that the Sandiganbayan committed no grave abuse of discretion.

Bank records make liar out of Ping–Tohs

By Michael Lim Ubac

LAWYERS for Vicky Toh, Thomas Toh and Kelvin Tan yesterday submitted to the Senate bank certifications which they said showed that Sen. Panfilo Lacson had lied when he claimed that the three Chinese-Filipinos were used as dummies by First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo in allegedly laundering campaign contributions of his wife, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The certifications issued by six banks disproved the existence of any single or joint accounts under the names of the Tohs and Tan, according to lawyers Gelacio Mamaril and Roberto Arca.

Mamaril said the certifications also confirmed that the accounts did not exist "from the very beginning."

The lawyers, who are from the Mamaril, Arca, Sevilla & Associates law firm, submitted the documents to the offices of Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senators Joker Arroyo, Edgardo Angara and Sergio Osmeña. The latter three senators chair the three committees handling the joint investigation of the Jose Pidal controversy.

"It is very clear from the certifications of the banks that the assertions of Senator Lacson are untrue and false for which our clients are entitled to some remedies," said Mamaril at a press briefing.

He said the banks had looked into their vaults and books when informed that his three clients had waived the confidentiality protection afforded them under the Bank Secrecy Law.

Mamaril said the bank certifications affirmed the non-existence of the accounts cited by Lacson in his Sept. 1 privilege speech.

"(Lacson) also mentioned the balance (of the accounts) as of July 2003. But when we went to the banks, the banks issued certifications that those accounts do not exist," said Mamaril.

Asked whether the certifications could have covered past accounts, he said: "It would seem from the verifications that the (accounts) don't exist from the very beginning."

Lacson had identified the accounts as:

- Jose Pidal/Vicky Toh joint Acct No. 00110102842 with Phil-Am Savings Bank and Acct No. 00730019184 with Union Bank.
- Vicky Toh Acct No. 00218008731 with Banco De Oro and Acct. No. 110430006842 with Banco Filipino.
- Kelvin Tan's Acct. No. 003461003573 with Allied Bank.
- And Thomas Toh Jr. Acct. No. 007431003769 with Metrobank and Trust Co.

Lacson had claimed that Mike Arroyo had stashed the unused portion of his wife's campaign contributions in these accounts.

To prove the authenticity of the certifications, Mamaril showed to reporters the original copies issued by presidents and senior vice presidents of the six banks.

"We are transmitting these certifications to the Senate for whatever action it may deem fit and proper," he said.

They're part of deception, says Ping

OPPOSITION Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday countered that the bank certifications presented by lawyers of Vicky and Thomas Toh and Kelvin Tan were "part of the deception to muddle the Jose Pidal investigation."

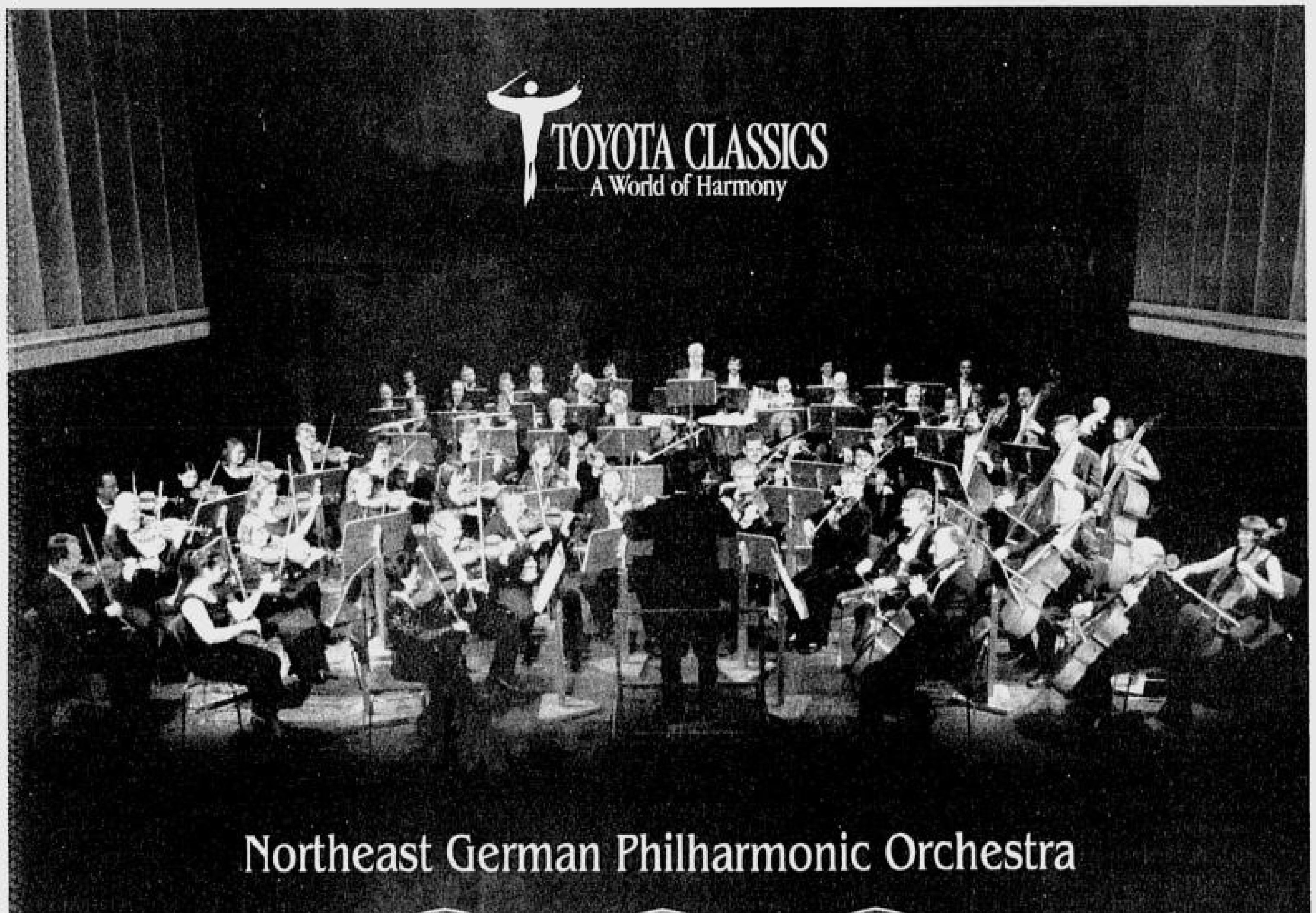
The certifications were irrelevant to the inquiry but were submitted to the Senate to deceive the public, the senator claimed in a statement.

The contents of the certifications "are open-ended and does not actually authenticate the non-existence of the accounts that are being scrutinized by the Senate," he said.

Lacson said it was a "gross misrepresentation of facts" for Vicky Toh, her brother Thomas and brother-in-law Tan to claim that the accounts had never existed at all.

"I've seen the bank certifications and nowhere did I see anything that would attest that the accounts never existed at all. I don't think that the banks even tried to look at their records during the periods I mentioned in my privilege speech," Lacson said.

He dared dared the Tohs to come home and personally file charges against him. *Michael Lim Ubac*



Koji Kawamoto
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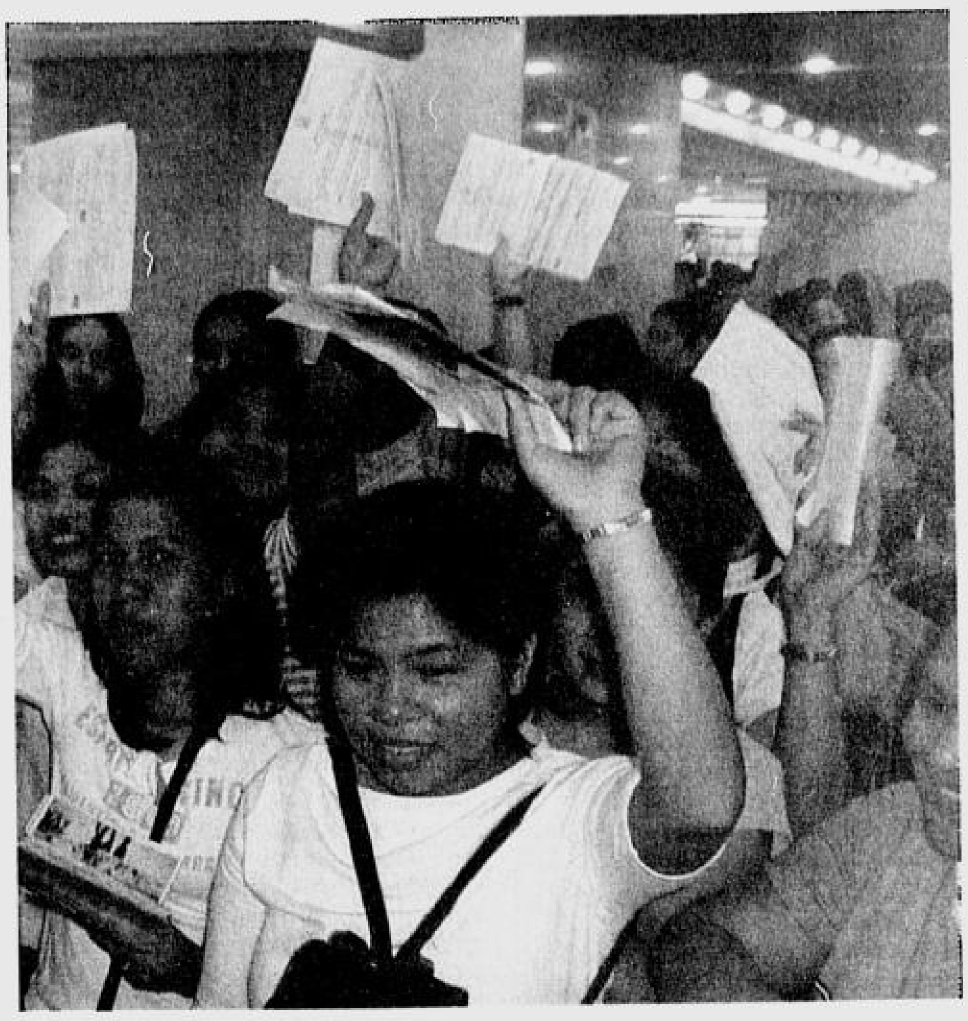

ABSENTEE VOTERS
Overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong raise their forms and supporting documents as they line up to register as absentee voters at the World Wide House. Hong Kong leads the list of foreign centers with the most number of registrants with more than 70,000. DANTE PERALTA

LDP holds crucial meet on '04 today

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE NATIONAL executive council of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) will meet today to forge a consensus on the choice of its possible standard bearer for 2004 and the proposed alliance with the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. and other political parties.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III said yesterday that these two issues will be the main agenda of today's meeting of the country's largest opposition party.

The LDP national executive council will discuss how it would proceed on the choice of its standard bearer for 2004 and possible alliances with other political parties such as NPC come 2004, Sotto said in a phone interview.

The LDP meeting to be held at the Manila Hotel at noon today will be a gathering of the party's national leadership, according to Sotto.

LDP president Sen. Edgardo Angara and Sotto earlier said that the party is considering five candidates as possible standard bearer. These are Cojuangco, action king Fernando Poe Jr., Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan.

Lacson and Honasan have so far declared their intention to run for president. Cojuangco will reportedly decide at the end of the month.

Angara has declared support for Cojuangco while other LDP members, mostly congressmen, prefer Lacson to be the party's presidential candidate.

On the other hand, Poe has been non-committal, but is being pushed strongly by deposed President Joseph Estrada, founder of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, a probable alliance partner of LDP.

Lacson, an LDP member, said he would attend today's LDP meeting.

Sotto said he believes the chance of the NPC aligning with the LDP for the 2004 elections was "very positive."

He said that the two parties had been conducting "exploratory talks" for some months now on their possible alliance in 2004.

This was confirmed by Angara who disclosed that he and Cojuangco have been holding talks for about two months now.

"We're looking at a grand coalition with a common vision," Angara said Tuesday at the weekly Bulong Pulungan at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel.

Angara said the alliance of two of the largest political parties will be finalized "in the next 10 days."

Angara said that the LDP and other parties it would be aligning with like the NPC would announce their candidates for president and vice president on or before Oct.15 and their senatorial lineup before the end of October.

Briton beats rape raps

ANGELES CITY—A Briton facing three complaints for rape was ordered freed by the city prosecutor's office here last week after it dropped the complaints filed by the city police on behalf of three Filipino girls in July.

But Barry Raymond Edwards, 58, a retired math professor from a London university, is still accused of violating Article 201 or the Anti-pornography Law of the Revised Penal Code.

Assistant City Prosecutor Ruben Hilario dismissed the rape cases due to lack of evidence and interest on the part of the alleged victims aged 14 to 17.

The complaint for pornography is set for preliminary investigation on Sept. 29.

The police here said they were informed only of the decision on Monday, three days after Edwards was released.

Edwards, who has been staying in Angeles City since 1996, is a resident of Essex, United Kingdom.

Florita Villar, Central Luzon director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, on Wednesday sought a reopening of the case.

Villar urged the police to file a petition to review the case at the city prosecutor. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Corpus to CRS in AFP revamp

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has approved a fresh reorganization of the Armed Forces involving at least 21 senior and mid-level officers, including Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus and Commodore Tirso Danga among others.

The reshuffle, the third so far this year, was brought on by the impending retirement of one senior official and was also part of the officers' "career movement," said Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the AFP vice chief of staff.

"Career move, that was what guided us in recommending their designation," Garcia said in a phone interview even as he confirmed that the President had approved the reshuffle yesterday.

Corpus, who quit as chief of the AFP Intelligence Service (Isafp) on July 29, two days after the July 27 failed coup, has been appointed to head the Civil Relations Service from Oct. 1. He takes over from Rear Adm. Edgardo Israel who is retiring next month.

As head of the CRS, Corpus will be in charge of relaying information to the "internal public," to reinforce the military forces' resolve and adherence to the Constitution in the wake of the failed coup, according to Garcia.

The CRS is also in charge of implementing the military's civil-military operations program, such as medical missions, disaster relief operations and rescue missions.

Since resigning as Isafp head, Corpus has been posted in the so-called Palace war room which he said was tasked with mapping out the government's antipoverty program in the countryside.

The group of junior officers and soldiers who staged the July 27 coup called for Corpus' resignation, accusing him of allegedly masterminding the deadly bombings, in Davao City last April. Corpus has denied the charge.

Danga, the commander of the AFP's Camp Aguinaldo headquarters, is the new Isafp chief, replacing Maj. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, the deputy chief of staff for intelligence (J2), who took over the top Isafp post following Corpus' resignation.

"Cabuay assumed the Isafp post in a temporary capacity while waiting for a permanent replacement," Garcia explained.

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Reality TV: Kris tells all on national TV

From page A1

Joey Marquez, her lover of one year and a half—until last Monday night when she said he cocked a gun and pointed it at her.

Even the most popular "chinovela," "Meteor Garden" on the same network, and her own high-rating "Game Ka Na Ba?" fizzled and fell out of sight like shooting stars, shot down by the fiery, passionate power of the reality TV that Aquino's tell-all confession showed.

Viewers of what must be the most widely watched news telecast in recent history gasped and exclaimed, ooh-ed and aah-ed, as Aquino revealed that Marquez, among other stunning information, had infected her with sexually transmitted disease, threw a cell phone bill at her face because she had been calling comedian and TV host Vic Sotto who was once rumored to be a suitor, that she burned their bed during their quarrel last Monday, and that she was prepared to take a lie detector test to prove she was telling the truth and nothing but.

She said that during other fights, Marquez had called her previous live-in lover, actor Phillip Salvador, a "bum." Salvador is the father of her son Joshua. Marquez also called her former boyfriend, Robin Padilla, "an ex-addict and an ex-convict."

Aquino moved female viewers when, near the end of her admissions, she asked for the forgiveness of, among others, her son 7-year-old Josh whom she said she had neglected because she loved Marquez too much, and to the mayor's estranged wife, actress Alma Moreno because, she said, if not for her, Marquez and Moreno could have gone back to each other's arms.

Aquino turned to the camera and said, adressing Marquez, "*Tinakot mo ako bago ako umalis. Sinabi mo sa akin na may ibubunyag ka.* Joey, *alam natin kung anong pinagdaanan natin nung* March."

She said that last August, she and Marquez had gone back to St. Luke's Medical Center for a checkup for her insurance. "If you want to destroy me because of that, you know what you did to me," she said.

When "TV Patrol" anchor Korina Sanchez asked her to elaborate, Aquino said, "This can destroy me. He gave me a sexually transmitted disease in August. I sought treatment because I was bleeding profusely."

She said he threatened to reveal the STD case just before she left Essensa Monday night. She quoted Marquez as saying, "'You think *kapag nalaman yan ng buong Pilipinas, may lalaki pang magpapakasal sa iyo?*' I told him, Joey, *ikaw ang may kasalanan nito.*"

She admitted that the latest quarrel was triggered by jealousy. She said that she was about to go to ABS to host "Game KNB" and she told Marquez to go to his meeting. She told him to turn on his cell phone so he could call his brother, Damba Marquez, to tell the latter he was on his way to the meeting.

"When he turned on the phone, the text messages came in. The name was Mariz. It must be a code. I was able to read parts of it: '*Hindi ako makapaniwalang nagawa mo.*'"

She said Marquez hastily erased the message, which had been sent twice, and then they grappled for possession of the phone until he threw it.

"*Bago kami nagkatutukan ng baril, inaamin ko, binuhusan ko siya ng fluid at ang kama*, scented fluid," she said. She said she then set the bed on fire but she immediately put out the fire with a pillow.

"*Totoo*, I admit it," she said, "I grabbed his genitals. I wanted to crush it. I told him, *ilang beses mo ba ako kailangang gaguhin?*"

She said that was when he grabbed her August cell phone billing statement from a closet and threw it at her face. "*Sinabi niya, ikaw ang mapapahiya ngayon, ikaw ang guilty! Kapag siya ang nalalagay sa alanganin, pinalalabas niya na ako ang nanlalalaki.* I have never been promiscuous in my entire life. *Sabi nya, nandiyan sa bill na yan, kinakausap mo pa rin siya.*"

She admitted that Marquez was referring to Sotto, who was once rumored to be courting her.

"I told him, *ayoko na*, Joey, I just want out, I'm leaving," she said. "*Doon nya kinuha yung baril at ikinasa nya sa akin. Nang nakapag-isip siguro, itinapon ang magazine at itinutok niya sa akin* (ang baril).

"Until now when I remember it, *nanginginig talaga ako. Kapag pumipikit ako, naririnig ko pa ang pagkasa ng baril.*"

She described the gun he used as "*mahaba. May* magazine. *Hindi maiksi*, not black. Grayish. *Ang naalala ko, parang ang laki-laki ng bilog na nakatutok sa akin.*"

She said that was when she told him she was going to her mother's house. "I'm going to my mom, Joey, and you're dead," she repeated.

She insisted that Marquez had guns. "I don't know how many. There was one that I would always see. Beyond that I don't know."

Shocker after shocker assaulted the viewers as the unflinching camera gave viewers a consistent close-up of Aquino's face, complete with eyebags and completely untouched by makeup, during the "TV Patrol" interview. Her eyes often focused on the camera, her eyes burning with rage but dry. Near the end, the bruised actress and TV host declared: "I'd be a liar if I said I don't love him anymore."

She added later, "*Ang dami ko nang tiniis* in the name of loving Joey."

The media star that is Aquino also said, "This is not a matter of me wanting more news about myself. This is not the type of news that I want."

Aquino earlier yesterday told the INQUIRER that their quarrel had not sparked another network war between ABS-CBN, where she has her shows, and GMA 7, where Marquez has his. But for two nights running, it was network war all over again.

Tuesday night when the story first broke on TV, primetime close-up and slow-mo shots of Aquino's bruises kept on being flashed on ABS-CBN, while Marquez was interviewed live on GMA, where he smiled and shook his head while denying that he threatened to shoot his lover.

"You keep saying you're prepared to lose everything, Joey," Aquino said, looking straight at the camera again, "but you don't have the balls."

She said she herself was prepared to lose everything, including her multimillion-peso and hosting acting career, after her damaging declarations.

She narrated to "TV Patrol" anchor Korina Sanchez that Monday night after the violent quarrel in the Essensa condo unit in Fort Bonifacio, "I went to my mom's house Monday night primarily because I needed my family. My closest friends came over. Advice *nila, manahimik. maghintay.* My brother Noy (Tarlac Rep. Noynoy Aquino) insisted that I had a medico-legal examination.

"I asked them, Noy specifically, let's bury this. But we found it impossible. The problem was, as early as 11 a.m. (Tuesday), *ang* camp *ni* Joey *nagsalita. Away lamang daw ito ng magkasintahan.* It was not. *Hindi kami nag-away ng walang saysay. Tinutukan niya ako ng baril. Kinasahan niya ako ng baril.*"

Then she turned away from Sanchez and toward the camera and said, "*Sinasabi ko ito sa buong Pilipinas.* Joey, *alam mo ang ginawa mo. Tinutukan mo ako, kinasahan mo ako. Hindi ko dapat paabutin sa ganito.*"

She told Sanchez she was prepared to take a lie detector test. "You're questioning my credibility," she said, still addressing Marquez. "You're insinuating *na nagsisinungaling ako. Marami akong kasalanan.* (I'm) not perfect. But I'm not a liar."

When Sanchez observed that it was the first time she saw Aquino this enraged, Aquino, daughter of slain Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., said, "I'm not crying. I'm angry because I loved him with all my heart. Ibinigay ko ang lahat. Hindi niya na-control ang temper nya.

"Hindi mo gagawin 'yan sa anak ng isang taong in-assassinate. Ilabas na natin yung ibang isyu. Yun ang isyu, tinutukan nya ako ng baril.

"Ilang beses na ba kami nag-away?" she told Sanchez. "You saw the bruises and you asked me, 'si Joey ba ang gumawa nyan?' I denied it to you because I loved him and because I wanted the relationship to work. Pero tinutukan niya ako ng baril kaya napilitan akong tumakbo sa pamilya ko."

She said she and Marquez had had many fights. "We fight on an almost weekly basis," she said.

"Ilang beses niyang inulit sa akin, 'Sino bang mga lalaking ipinagmamalaki mo? Ang tatay ng anak mo, bum. Ikaw ang nagpakain sa kanya. Si Robin Padilla na naging boyfriend mo, drug addict na ex-convict.'

"Parati niya akong minamaliit. Palagi niyang sinasabi, 'you're so lucky to have me. Pasalamat ka na nagtitiyaga ako sa 'yo.' And I took it. Ganun ako ka-tanga. Tinggap ko lahat yun. Kinalimutan ko ang pagpapalaki ng nanay ko sa akin."

She said there were many times they were going to break up, but she begged him to "work it out."

"Umabot sa point na, sa Essensa, naka-bathrobe ako hinahabol ko siya sa basement. Sinasabi ko puwede pa natin itong maayos. I wanted to make things right. I was looking forward to the day that we could make it legal."

"My mom told me that for somebody so intelligent, bakit pagdating sa lalaki, sobrang boba mo? Nagpakaboba ako para kay Joey."

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European Union lifts ban on RP fish products

THE EUROPEAN Union has lifted a ban on Philippine fish products three months after it disallowed the entry of the country's aquaculture exports because of the alleged presence of toxic substances.

Philippine milkfish, tilapia and prawn will be allowed to enter European ports beginning October just at the start of the peak season—autumn and the fast-approaching Christmas holidays—for their demand.

"Having complied with the European requirement for the monitoring of harmful chemical residues in aquaculture products, the country is now allowed to export aquaculture products, including prawn, tilapia and *bangus*, to the European Union," said Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo, Jr.

Philippine fish exports are a $10 million-a-year business and Lorenzo said fish traders expect the Europeans to buy the country's exports, especially since the euro has been exhibiting some strength.

Lorenzo said the EU member states decided on Sept. 17 in Brussels to re-list the Philippines as an authorized exporter to the EU after receiving documents that showed the country's capability to detect traces of harmful chemicals and banned antibiotics in its aquaculture products.

Aside from submitting the necessary documentation attesting to the absence of banned chemicals from Philippine fish, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources has also acquired equipment to monitor toxicity in the country's aquaculture exports.

The purchase of the equipment was not specifically required by the EU, but the government voluntarily moved to purchase the equipment to avoid further complications, said BFAR director Malcolm Sarmiento.

"We bought the two units of Elisa equipment on our own initiative despite the fact that the Philippines never had any problem with antibiotic residues and other harmful substances in our shrimp exports," Sarmiento said. *Norman Bordadora*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, September 25, 2003
25th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Hg 1:1-8
Gospel: Lk 9:7-9

King Herod heard of all this and did not know what to think, for people said, "This is John, raised from the dead." Others believed that Elijah or one of the ancient prophets had come back to life. As for Herod, he said, "I had John beheaded; who is this man about whom I hear such wonders?" And he was anxious to see him.

Commentary

"Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may appear in my glory, says the Lord." The Glory of the Lord dwells in the temple but because of the sins of Israel, the Glory of Yahweh left the temple. Jesus is the new Temple in which the fullness of God's glory dwells. St. Francis misunderstood the command of the Crucified Christ at the dilapidated chapel when he heard: "Francis, rebuild my church." He understood the physical building and so he single-handedly restored the chapel. But he came to realize that the church that Jesus wants to rebuild is his people especially the poor. Francis made himself poor in order to be the servant of the poor. He understood that the poor is the new temple where Jesus dwells demanding our service and commitment.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW/MERCANTILE LAW (CORPORATION LAW)—Petition for corporate rehabilitation—Rule 4, Section 2(k) of the Interim Rules on Corporate Rehabilitation, distinctly provides that, first, under letter (a), the filing of the petition has been duly authorized; and, second, under letter (b), the directors and stockholders have irrevocably approved and/or consented to, in accordance with existing laws, all actions or matters necessary and desirable to rehabilitate the debtor including, but not limited to, amendments to the articles of incorporation and by-laws or articles of partnership; increase or decrease in the authorized capital stock; issuance of bonded indebtedness, alienation, transfer, or encumbrance of assets of the debtor; and modification of shareholder's rights. Observe that Rule 4, Section 2(k), prescribes the need for a certification; one, to state that the filing of the petition has been duly authorized, and two, to confirm that the directors and stockholders have irrevocably approved and/or consented to, in accordance with existing laws, all actions or matters necessary and desirable to rehabilitate the corporate debtor, including, as and when called for, such extraordinary corporate actions as may be marked out. The phrase, "in accordance with existing laws," obviously would refer to that which is, or to those that are, intended to be done by the corporation in the pursuit of its plan for rehabilitation. Thus, if any extraordinary corporate action (mentioned in Rule 4, Section 2(k), of the Interim Rules on Corporate Rehabilitation) are to be done under the proposed rehabilitation plan, the petitioner would be bound to make it known that it has received the approval of a majority of the directors and the affirmative votes of stockholders representing at least two-thirds (2/3) of the outstanding capital stock of the corporation. Where no such extraordinary corporate acts (or one that under the law would call for a two-thirds (2/3) vote) are contemplated to be done in carrying out the proposed rehabilitation plan, then the approval of stockholders would only be by a majority, not necessarily a two-thirds (2/3), vote, as long as, of course, there is a quorum a fact which is not here being disputed. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Vitug, First Division, Chas Realty And Development Corporation v. Talavera, G.R. No. 151925, February 6, 2003] By R. B. Vera

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Businessmen sharply divided on GMA '04 bid

From page A1

Magdalo group of soldiers in Makati City, the spike in bank robberies and kidnappings, and the accusations of corruption made by Sen. Panfilo Lacson against the President's husband—had convinced the banking community that a strong leader was needed to unite the country and avert an economic collapse.

An official of one of the Philippines' biggest and most influential business groups said that considering the President's less than stellar handling of the economy, the national interest dictated that she abide by her earlier declaration not to seek a new term,

The official said the President's failure to address the economy and the peace and order situation had led to dissatisfaction in the business community, which nursed high expectations of her capability when she was installed in office in 2001 with the toppling of the Estrada administration.

If she decides to run, businessmen would view this as a breach of trust and a big blow to her credibility, the official said.

Francis Chua, executive vice president of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc., said that like any other Filipino qualified to seek the presidency, Ms Macapagal had "all the right to run."

"And I think she should run," he said.

Chua said the President's record low ratings in the latest Pulse Asia survey was brought about by the political turmoil, peace and order issues, and high electricity costs.

"All these put a lot of pressure on her ratings, but everyone can see that she is working hard," Chua said.

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Lakas threatened with 3-way split

From page A1

after the Oct. 7 meeting of the party's national directorate, of which the choice of standard-bearer would be tops on the agenda.

Rufino, who is also Lakas national executive director, said they were hoping that Ms Macapagal would announce her decision before the state visit of US President George W. Bush on Oct. 18 "so that people will not say that we were dictated upon by the Americans."

Spiritual advice

Arroyo had reportedly been seeking a meeting with Villanueva for three weeks but the opportunity materialized only on Monday.

Per the source's account, Arroyo came to Villanueva's office at the Strata Building in Mandaluyong City to seek "spiritual advice and support" because his wife would "run again" and would announce her decision before Bush's visit.

But Villanueva was noncommittal and told Arroyo that he would first "pray over" the matter, the source said.

Arroyo also reportedly told Villanueva that he had been seeking old-time supporters and financiers to assure them that his wife would seek another term.

Speaking from Rome, Lakas spokesperson Heherson Alvarez yesterday expressed confidence that the pro-Cojuangco group in the party would not be "sufficiently numerous to color the decision of Lakas" to support Ms Macapagal until the end.

However, Alvarez said, if indeed the President would reject the draft, a possible alternative could be Sen. Ramon Magsaysay.

We don't care

But according to Paras, "if GMA runs, the party will split."

"We don't care what the others [in Lakas] will do," he said. "We will stick it out with Danding."

Cojuangco is the founding chair of the Nationalist People's Coalition, which counts at least 70 congressmen as members and is Lakas' main partner in the House.

"Even Speaker De Venecia has said that if GMA doesn't run, Danding will become the standard-bearer of Lakas in coalition with the NPC," Paras pointed out.

Cojuangco has conducted nationwide consultations to feel the public pulse, and is set to announce his political plans for 2004 on Sept. 30.

Asked what Cojuangco would say on that day, Paras said: "He's running. I have no doubts."

Cojuangco nephew Rep. Gilbert Teodoro Jr. (NPC, Tarlac) said his uncle would decide whether to run independently of the President's possible candidacy.

Make or break

"[He] always decides on his own. No one can pressure him and he won't succumb to pressure," Teodoro said.

Cojuangco's plans will "make or break Lakas," said Lozada. He added: "Then there are the Roco supporters."

De Venecia earlier said the Lakas national directorate would convene on Oct. 7 to nominate Ms Macapagal as the party's standard-bearer.

But Lozada said the existence of the dissenting blocs should be considered. "What will Lakas do about this? How will the party deal with members who are going for either Cojuangco or Roco?" he said.

Among those expected to attend the Lakas meeting are former President Fidel Ramos (chair emeritus), Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. (president), De Venecia, and some 500 senators, congressmen, mayors and other officials.

Ms Macapagal would have presided over the meeting. But she will be in Bali on Oct. 6-8 to attend the informal summit of the Asean.

Go-go mood

Rufino said it was the consensus of party leaders and even the business community that Ms Macapagal was the best person to lead the country out of its economic and political troubles.

"We want Gloria! This is exciting for us. The party will rally behind her," he said.

He also said the prospect of Ms Macapagal's running had rejuvenated Lakas members and instilled a "go-go mood" in the party. "*Sumigla ang partido*. Some of them were starting to lose hope but now, *biglang sumaya*," he said.

Clamor

"The party members, the different sectors of business, and some other groups are very insistent on persuading the President to change her mind," Bunye said. "So this contradicts the claims of critics of the President."

Bunye took a grin-and-bear-it stance toward Sen. Edgardo Angara and other critics who ridiculed the President's invoking God's name in making her decisions. Angara had said that the President was delusional.

"We have made our statement that the President is mulling things over and she's seeking divine guidance. I believe the choice of words is inappropriate," Bunye said on Angara's statement.

Asked about Rufino's subsequent statement that Ms Macapagal's candidacy was a done deal, Bunye said: "I believe we have said what needs to be said, so let's just wait for the President's decision."

Ms Macapagal yesterday inspected the Palace grounds, giving instructions on the movement of people and officials for the much anticipated visit of Bush.

But she waved reporters away when they tried to pose some questions.

75-80 percent

In Rome, where he is part of the President's advance party, Alvarez told the INQUIRER that there was now a "75-80-percent chance" that Ms Macapagal would run.

He said that the "long wait" was over and that the President had indicated to her party mates to stick together and rally behind her.

He said the President was fully aware that a few Lakas members, particularly those running for election, were already considering shifting allegiance to candidates of other political parties.

"The first decision not to run was done under so much heart-throbbing and praying, then she made a decision," Alvarez said. "The same will happen when she prays again. There's been a decision in her mind and heart, and that is to run. She has definitely reconsidered her position."

Bar examinees protest trauma, extra cost, time

From page A1

matic process for causes that are not of their own making, they should be accorded compassion and leniency in the correction and grading of their test booklets in Mercantile Law. A 25-percent bonus should be granted," said the petition filed by SJS head Samson Alcantara.

Alcantara said that while the wisdom of the high court to nullify the test could not be questioned, its resetting has resulted in an extension of the bar examinees' stay in Metro Manila for another week, "leaving them emotionally, financially, and mentally exhausted."

Punished for act of a few

"They will also be taking the test during risky hours of the night. In a way, they are being punished for the dastardly acts of a few," he added.

The SC had scheduled the new exam for 8 p.m. at the De La Salle University in Manila.

Alcantara noted that a big majority of the examinees come from the provinces and had planned to stay in Manila only until the end of September, when the exams are supposed to end. He said leaves of those in government service will also end by then.

A professor who has been teaching for 17 years in one of Manila's top law schools blamed law fraternities for the leaks. She said fraternities have the capability and connections to get copies of exam questions.

The professor, who asked not to be identified, said that in one instance, a fraternity even asked one of its members to woo the secretary of an examiner so they could get their hands on the questions.

She also blamed the complicity of some school officials.

Not University of Batangas

The University of Batangas (UB), reacting to news reports and text messages that it was the source of the leak, issued a statement denying the reports, calling them unfair and unjust.

The university is the only educational institution in the province with a college of law and is partly owned by former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Cinderella Valenton, a representative of the UB bar examinees, said the reports were "very unfair to us."

"We weren't able to review on Tuesday because of that. This is also prejudicial to our review for this Sunday," Valenton said.

Pure torture

According to Valenton, there are 16 bar examinees from UB this year. She said they all cried after the examinations last Sunday because they found it very difficult.

Valenton said UB bar examinees finished the test way ahead of the maximum time limit because in law school they were trained to "answer briefly, concisely and direct to the point."

Retaking the Mercantile Law exam, Valenton said, would mean more expenses for the examinees because they would have to stay longer in Manila.

"We have to review again because we have no choice but to retake the exam. Do you know how that feels? It's like your brain is being squeezed, and it's pure torture," she said.

In Baguio City, law students said they were planning to join protests in Metro Manila over the bar examination leak that reportedly benefited several universities in the metropolis.

Protesters from Baguio

Roney Jone Gandeza, law professor of the Baguio Colleges Foundation (BCF), said they wanted to dramatize their "disappointment" with a system that "favors Metro Manila law applicants over provincial law students."

Gandeza said the protests should lead to a more comprehensive review of the system in administering the bar exams.

But Jocelyn Lising, chair of the BCF bar operations, said they don't have any proof of the bias for Metro Manila law students.

"We don't even have proof against Perez, whom everyone blames for the leaks," said Lising, a BCF law student. *Reports from Gil Cabacungan, Philip Tubeza, Mei Magsino PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Vincent Cabreza PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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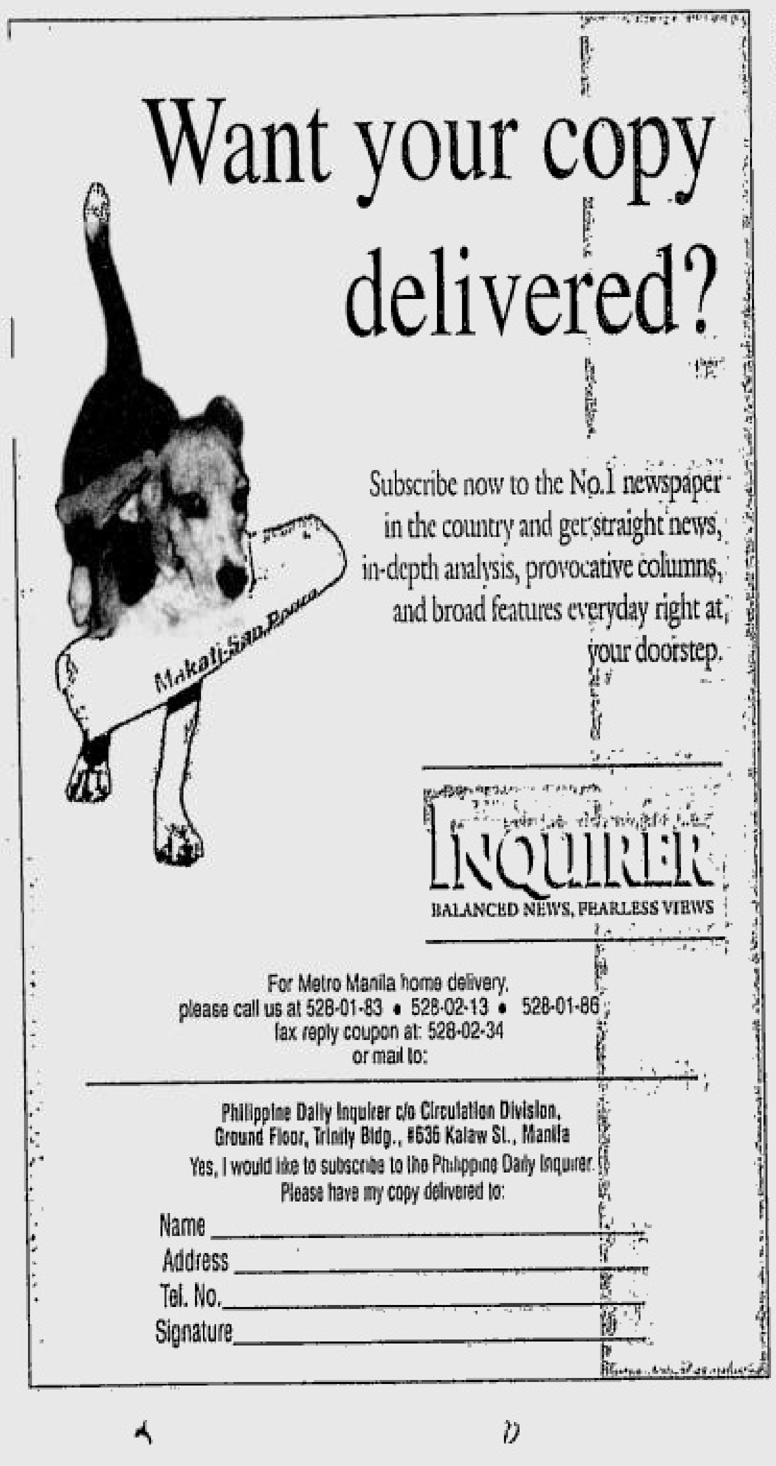
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Ermita appointment lauded: More civilian than . . .

From page A1

the assumption of Ermita of the high-profile post vacated by Angelo Reyes.

Arroyo said Ermita "meets the requirements" of a defense chief.

"He's capable. He's not tainted. He has the potential. In other words, he's thoroughly prepared (for the job)," he said.

The administration senator pointed out that Ermita was the best choice for the post because of his background both in the battlefield and at the negotiating table.

"At this point, he's more civilian than military," said Arroyo who stressed that being a defense chief required more than military skills. "It requires a lot of tact, diplomacy and patience."

Before leaving for New York, President Macapagal-Arroyo rallied the Armed Forces and the defense establishment behind Ermita.

"He comes with an impressive track record in peace, development and security management," the President said in a statement.

The President gave Ermita a set of priorities to pursue during his watch. She asked him to sustain the momentum of reforms in the military organization, bring the peace process into the mainstream of defense doctrine and push forward the AFP modernization program.

Bunye said Ermita, who is currently in the Middle East, was expected to join the President in New York for her meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. Ms Macapagal would discuss with Mahathir the scheduled resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front slated next month in Kuala Lumpur.

Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan said Ermita had the potential to "convert the defense establishment into one that would make it an instrument of national unity."

Honasan said that Ermita, a protegé of former President Fidel Ramos, could adopt the formula that Ramos used when he came into power in 1992—"promulgate a comprehensive peace process for all rebel groups.

This would include the officers and soldiers who participated in the July 27 mutiny, said Honasan, who has also been charged by the government for his involvement in the mutiny.

The senator reminded that when Ramos became president in 1992 he adopted this formula, resulting in "six years of stability."

Ermita has a "broader view of the problems of national defense and security" because of his vast experience in the AFP and the defense establishment, according to Sen. Rodolfo Biazon.

He said Ermita once held the position of AFP vice chief of staff and served as acting secretary following the retirement of former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado. Ermita has served as presidential peace adviser since his new appointment.

"Defense Secretary Ermita understands fully the nuances of the principle of the chain of command where his role as defense secretary is to formulate policies and not to micromanage the affairs of the AFP," Biazon said in a statement.

Biazon said the President could now concentrate on the economic and social problems of the country.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, said that with Ermita steering the AFP's direction, there would be a marked improvement in the security situation and "significant progress" in the peace negotiations with rebels.

Arroyo recalled that when he was Executive Secretary of then President Corazon Aquino, Ermita was AFP's vice chief of staff.

"He knows the military inside out. During the five coup attempts (against the Aquino administration), he was the vice chief, so he understands (the situation on the ground)."

With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana

Sotto, Gringo seek leniency for mutineers

By Christine Avendaño

OPPOSITION Senators Vicente Sotto and Gregorio Honasan said military authorities should show leniency and "some degree of compassion" for the soldiers who are being detained for instigating the July 27 failed coup.

Sotto and Honasan said they paid a visit to the 24 officers and 40 enlisted men detained at the Marine Detachment Center, Philippine Marine Command at Fort Bonifacio, in Makati on Tuesday night after media reports quoted the families of the soldiers as complaining about the jail conditions and restrictions on visitors.

The two senators said they found the conditions of the officers and soldiers as "not inhumane" but asked authorities to show some leniency when it comes to visiting hours.

Sotto and Honasan said they felt it was their "moral obligation" to visit the detained soldiers as they, and Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, supposedly helped pave the way for the mutineers and government officials to hold a dialog at the Oakwood Premier Hotel which the rebellious soldiers had seized.

Biazon did not join Sotto and Honasan during the visit as he had an engagement.

"There was nothing political about the visit," said Honasan, who has been charged with the crime of coup d'etat for his alleged participation in the failed coup.

All they wanted was to look into the conditions at the center and find out what they needed "for humanitarian reasons," he said.

Honasan said they found that conjugal visits were not being allowed and that the detainees can only see and talk to their families from behind bars.

They were told of an incident where a toddler was placed under the barrier so his father could hug him. But the child got stuck in the bars which traumatized him, they said.

They also said they found there was a problem of sanitation in the toilets, partly because of the lack of water in Fort Bonifacio.

But the detainees have the use of a basketball court in the detention center, they said.

Marine Commandant Gen. Emmanuel Teodocio has promised to look into the issues that the two senators raised.

Sotto said he would send a team of sanitation experts to find out what can be done about the toilets.

Despite their complaints, Honasan said the morale of the detained soldiers was quite high.

"They knew the consequences of their actions and are prepared to face it," he said, adding that there was a need for authorities to show "some degree of compassion without jeopardizing security."

Honasan said he and other senators planned on visiting other military camps where the other detainees are being held.

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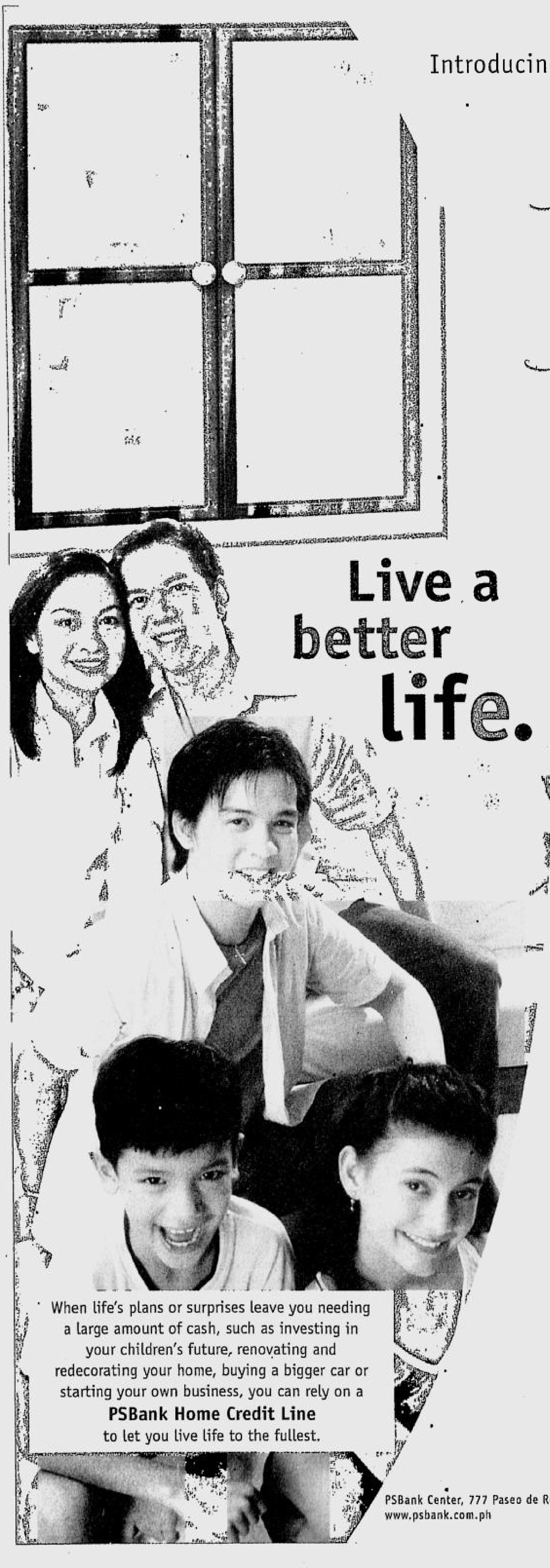
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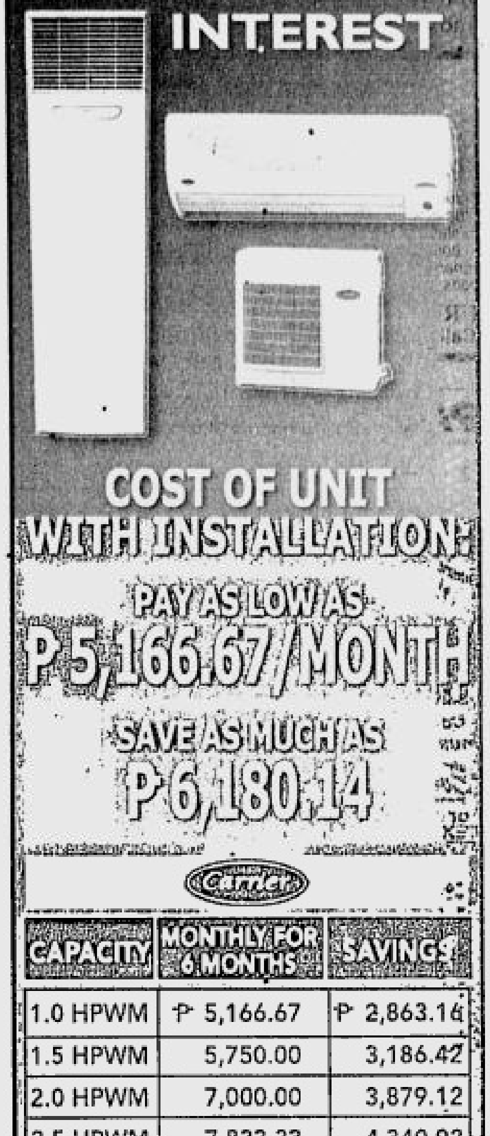

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3.0 TRCM	11,000.00	6,095.76

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1.5 HPWM	5,833.33	3,232.60
2.0 HPWM	7,249.99	4,017.66
2.5 HPWM	7,916.67	4,387.10

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1.5 HPWM	6,166.67	3,417.32
2.0 HPWM	7,583.33	4,202.38
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GMA approval rating plunges to all-time low

From page A1

for the survey which has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points at the 95-percent confidence level.

Poisoned atmosphere

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Lacson's "politicking has undercut trust in the presidency and other national institutions including the legislature and the judiciary in a poisoned political atmosphere."

Lacson has accused First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo of hiding some P260 million in campaign contributions to Ms Macapagal in 12 bank accounts, including those under his alleged assumed name Jose Pidal. The First Gentleman has denied the accusations.

"Our society is in the middle of a mood swing toward negativism instigated by malicious mudslinging," Bunye said. "We have seen the worst and we think the ratings have bottomed out. There are ups and downs and the President has learned to live with them."

Bunye has said that Ms Macapagal is mulling over suggestions that she run in 2004 and that she is seeking divine guidance. The First Couple will have an audience with Pope John Paul II in Rome over the weekend.

Bunye disagreed with observations that the decline in the ratings of Ms Macapagal showed her lack of credibility on the money-laundering issue Lacson raised against the First Gentleman.

"The survey was done at the height of the controversy but eventually you will note that he (Lacson) has failed to support charges with hard and documented evidence and I believe the people will see through that strategy of Senator Lacson," the presidential spokesperson said.

All classes

Miranda said there was "much depreciation" and erosion of the President's political capital across all geographic areas and socio-economic classes.

"The greatest depreciation in public approval is registered in Metro Manila (15 points) and among the poor class E (21 points). Even traditionally supportive Visayans show an uncharacteristic 8-point drop in public approval for the sitting President," Miranda said.

The pollster said Mindanao already registered a low trust level for Ms Macapagal in the August survey.

Class E, which Miranda noted "assisted" the President during the Oakwood mutiny, showed a big 10-point reduction in its presidential trust rating.

Pulse Asia said public approval and trust ratings decreased significantly practically across all 18 economic, political and other issues, including enforcing discipline on the military.

Illegal drugs

"The biggest depreciation of public approval—involving a loss of no less than 18 points—is among people who cite as their most urgent national concerns one of the administration's most visible action areas: fighting the widespread sale and use of illegal drugs," the polling group said. In this area, the President's approval rating plunged from 56 percent to 38 percent.

There was also a big drop of 18 percent in public approval from people concerned with protection of human rights.

Pulse Asia said Ms Macapagal's highest issue-based disapproval rating of 36 percent came from people who believe enforcing discipline on the military was a most urgent concern.

Low pay, high prices

Pulse Asia said economic issues also dragged the President's approval rating. "The low pay of workers, high prices of basic necessities, lack of livelihood opportunities and great poverty of many Filipinos generate some of the most depreciated presidential approval ratings," it said.

Despite the President's high-visibility campaigns, none of her economic, political and other governance issues merited a majority approval from the public except for coping with terrorism, according to Pulse Asia.

The survey showed the public perceived "little dynamism" on the Macapagal administration.

Silver lining

The President's best approval ratings come from people concerned with having housing. They gave her the sole majority rating of 54 percent.

Pulse Asia said the President absorbed a 9-point loss (now down to 48 percent) in approval rating from people who believe restoring popular trust in government and its officials was an urgent national concern.

But this sector remains one of her "relatively appreciative audiences," the polling group said.

It said the marginal increase in their disapproval rating was a minor management problem. "Nevertheless, she may easily alienate this group if the group were impressed with the need for her to keep her pledge not to run for the presidency in 2004," Pulse Asia said.

Bunye saw a silver lining in the survey.

"It's important to note one aspect of the Pulse Asia survey indicating that a great many of our people anticipate a better life next year so this may indicate a possible upswing of the President's ratings in the next surveys," he said.

United anew

In her departure statement, Ms Macapagal said: "The Oakwood incident is a thing of the past and our country is fully united anew. Those who are sowing intrigues and discord have been set aside."

Prior to her departure, the President designated Vice President Teofisto Guingona as caretaker President to dispel rumors of their estranged relations; named retired Gen. Eduardo R. Ermita as the new Defense Secretary as part of her efforts to calm the restive military; and personally monitored the sprucing up of Malacañang in preparation for President George W. Bush's state visit on Oct. 18.

"I am leaving for the US, Italy and France as part of our foreign policy drive based on peace, development and fight against terrorism," the President said.

With a report from Gil Cabacungan Jr.

Kris: Gun brought back memories of dad

From page A1

"You're home, you're safe, and Joshua's safe," and then hugged her, the sources said.

"That was when she finally broke down and started crying," one source said.

One source said that aside from the bruises on her arms, Kris also had contusions in the legs.

At the Philippine National Police Firearms and Explosives Division, Sr. Supt. Geary Barias told reporters yesterday that as far their records show, Marquez does not have a 9mm.

4 witnesses

Later in the day, Kris' brother, Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino, presented to the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) four witnesses who supposedly would testify against Marquez.

Aquino said that the four witnesses, two women and two men, did not come from showbiz. He declined to name them or to disclose what they know about the Essensa incident.

"We are here to prepare evidence for whatever cases are to be filed. The closer the time to the incident, the better for us," Aquino told reporters.

Two of the witnesses are said to be friends of Kris whom she called right after the alleged incident while the two others were inside Essensa on the night of the incident.

"Mayor Marquez has several guns but no 9mm. He has a caliber 45 and several other guns," Barias said. He declined to reveal what the other guns were "for the sake of privacy."

Barias also said Aquino, who might not be familiar with guns, might have mistaken a .45 caliber pistol for a 9mm gun. "She might not be an expert on guns so she was not able to identify it and mistook a .45 with a 9mm."

Once a case is filed against Marquez, Barias said, he could have Marquez's firearms confiscated.

In the case of an administrative case filed with the Interior and Local Government, Marquez could have his firearms confiscated and licenses to carry these guns revoked. "There could be a confiscation of the firearms and revocation of licenses if there is an order from the investigative unit or the court."

He also said the licenses for Marquez's guns are updated.

PNP Director for Operations Director Ricardo De Leon told reporters yesterday that possible cases that Aquino could file are grave threats and physical injuries.

As of press time, Aquino's camp has yet to file a case against Marquez.

Marquez denial

"I categorically deny beating up Kris and poking a gun at her," Marquez said in a statement yesterday.

"I have a firearm licensed to me. But it was not with me at that time,." he added.

"I respect the Aquino family. It is normal for them to commiserate with Kris and support her especially if what she claims happened is true. But, I appeal for sobriety and for the chance to present to them what really happened. More than anyone else, they know Kris and what she is capable of doing. I did not want this to happen or for this to be blown out of proportion in media. But since it is already there, the least that I can do is spare Kris from the negative backlash of my airing my side."

Grave threats

"This could be more of a general case of grave threats. But we leave it to the lawyers if there was harm or injuries. It could be physical injuries but that would depend on the findings of the doctors," De Leon said.

Early Tuesday morning, Kris had gone to the Makati Medical Center to have her bruises examined and treated.

De Leon added that attempted homicide could not be the case to be filed because "no shots were fired. It's just a threat ... As what we have said, we allow their lawyers to make an evaluation of what happened and to present their witnesses."

No ordinary matter

Also, De Leon added that the PNP is giving the matter due importance. "She (Kris) is the daughter of a former president. There is a special concern because it also involves a government official. He (Joey) is a mayor so this is not an ordinary matter and deserves the special attention on the part of the Chief PNP."

Once a case is filed against Marquez, De Leon said the PNP will also have to inform Interior and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina.

Kris more important

In his statement Marquez also said: "If the Aquino family is willing, I will face them and present to them what really transpired that night so they can judge me based on the truth.

"If the Aquino family agrees to this, I will refrain from airing my side of the story in public. Never mind if my career and personal integrity is sacrificed. Kris is more important than all of these. I just want to clear my name with her family in the interest of the truth. As a public servant, I have accepted the fact that persecution and false impressions are part of the territory."

Marquez reiterated that "I have no record of hurting anyone, much more a woman of Kris' stature. She is the daughter of former president Corazon Aquino and our national hero, Benigno Aquino; both of whom I deeply respect and hold in high regard."

Missing Kris

"I miss her," Marquez told the INQUIRER in an interview yesterday.

"I haven't slept a wink last night," Marquez said. "It was only last night that everything has sunk in ... that everything is happening ... that everything is real."

He said all his friends had come to see him, among them actor Richard Gomez who advised him to stay cool.

Marquez quoted Gomez as saying, *"Kool ka lang* (Keep cool). You will survive this."

But the mayor admitted that he was also feeling "like I'm a victim."

Alma Moreno

He cited his break up with actress Alma Moreno to whom he was married for 12 years.

"What happened to Ness (Moreno's nickname) and myself was the worst thing that could ever happen in a relationship, but I never hit her," Marquez claimed.

He was referring to how he reportedly caught Moreno having an affair with another man.

"I still didn't cock a gun and point it at her," he said.

Marquez married Moreno in Las Vegas and exchanged vows with her again here at a garden wedding at the Sampaguita studios compound. The couple's marriage ended in December last year and is now in the last stages of annulment.

Marquez denied that Kris had broken up his marriage, saying he met the actress only last March or three months after he and Moreno split up.

Ironically, Marquez met Kris during an interview with the mayor about his split from Moreno in the "The Buzz." They began dating after that, Marquez said.

The mayor, who is serving his last term and has plans to run as Parañaque representative next year, said he has also realized that the latest controversy in his life could mean the end of his political career.

Price to pay

"What can I do? It's now a battle of perceptions," he said. "What ever happens, I've done a good job (as Parañaque mayor)."

But he claimed that while he was on the job as mayor and visiting construction sites yesterday, the people he met sympathized with him.

"They were more concerned about the break up and not with the accusations that Kris hurled at me," he said. "They never even asked me if it were true that I hurt her. They know me enough to know that I could never hurt another human being."

In a television interview last Tuesday, Marquez had claimed that Kris had threatened to destroy him. He had also quoted her as saying that "people would believe me because I'm more popular than you."

The incident could also end his show biz career, Marquez said.

"That is the price I have to pay," he said. "All I ask is that she tells the truth. I hope that we can still talk. I am sure everything could be explained. I will just wait and see."

'I'm not a liar'

"I may be guilty of many things, but I'm not a liar," Kris told the INQUIRER yesterday afternoon by cell phone, from her mother's house on Times Street. *"Marami akong dapat pagbayarang mga kasalanan, pero hindi ako sinungaling."*

Asked if she was willing to face Marquez again, Kris said, "No. When somebody points a gun at you, and cocks the gun, you don't face him anymore. What if he fires the gun the next time?"

Kris admitted that she underwent a drug test, on the advice of her lawyers, and that doctors verified the medicines she has been taking for allergy and asthma, among others.

She said her lead lawyer is now Sigfrid Fortun.

She also admitted that she went to Manila Auxiliary Bishop Soc Villegas for confession and spiritual advice. All went well, was all she would say of that meeting.

Yesterday morning, "Morning Girls with Kris and Korina," a live talk show on ABS-CBN, was packed up, and a pre-taped episode was shown instead. The episode that was shown had been pre-taped on Sept. 16.

Korina, however, was apparently not informed that the live airing of the show had been canceled. Earlier, she was announcing on her radio show on dzMM that Kris would be on "Morning Girls."

After the live show was packed up, Kris told the INQUIRER that she was going to meet with lawyers Rene Saguisag and the Fortun brothers to discuss her next move. The meeting was held at the Times Street home of former President Aquino, where Kris has been staying after she left the Essensa condo unit.

The condo unit in Fort Bonifacio is known to belong to Marquez's sister Via Hoffman.

Yesterday afternoon, Kris said the lawyers had advised her to make a statement only once, which she did later on "TV Patrol." "I'll tell the whole truth," she promised earlier. ***(Story on Page A1.)***

To keep secret

According to sources, Kris was not supposed to talk about the quarrel in public. One source said that on Monday night at the Times Street home, the Aquinos and close friends were one in saying that Kris should keep it a secret "because she did not need the publicity."

Kris finally talked after Marquez started "going around and issued a statement," one source said.

Normal day for Cory

Deedee Siytangco, the former president's spokesperson, yesterday said "today (Wednesday) is a normal day for Ms Aquino. She even went to work. She said she has left everything that concerns Kris to her lawyer."

Kris stressed that her split-up with Marquez has not become another cause for the network war between ABS-CBN, where she hosts talk shows, and GMA 7, where Marquez has a talk show and a sitcom.

"In fairness to Mel (Tiangco), it's not a network war," Kris told the INQUIRER. "She has been very fair."

Tuesday night, while "TV Patrol" on ABS was reporting the violent split-up, GMA's Tiangco was doing a live interview of Marquez on "Frontpage."

Ford convertible

Later that night, Kris turned off her TV set when she saw Joey airing his side on GMA 7's late-night newscast "Saksi," a source said.

The source said Kris had reportedly paid the down payment for a Ford sports convertible that she was planning to give Marquez, and not a Porsche as rumored earlier.

Tuesday night, Marquez alleged that Kris left the Essensa unit after warning him "she would destroy me."

"All I remembered was that I simply sat in one corner and took the beating from her," he told "Saksi" news anchor Arnold Clavio. "She said she would go to her mom and tell on me."

He said he was willing to submit himself to any investigative body to prove his innocence. "Kris, you know that I have not laid a hand on you because I love you," he said on "Saksi." "All I ask is for you to tell the truth. It does not mean that I don't care anymore. I wish it didn't have to go on this way."

True confessions and dirty laundry on national TV

From page A1

haps sexually transmitted disease.

Welcome to the Philippines!

For nearly an hour last night, Aquino and Marquez fought a virtual war over television that had the entire archipelago glued to their sets. It was another episode to their long-running soap opera that started characteristically enough with loud, show-bizzy declarations of love for one another against all the odds—after all, she's the daughter of a well-regarded former president and a national martyr who seems to have a knack for falling in love with the wrong guy, usually much older than her and married, like Marquez—and seems now about to end abruptly with loud battle cries against each other.

The two antagonists now stand face-to-face-combat-ready and vowing to take no prisoners.

And since they're both show-biz to the bone-he is a comedian and former basketball player while she is practically on television 24/7 as multiple host of a daytime talk show, a daily game show, and a weekly gossip show - they're more than willing to fight their ugly battle before television audiences and the whole world.

But before they massacre one another, they said last night that they were coming clean on the scandal of their recent break-up that has gripped the nation since Tuesday, when Aquino went to the police to complain that Marquez had beaten her and pointed a gun at her.

Liar, liar

Saying she was irked by Marquez's suggestion the previous day that she was making things up, Aquino told newscaster Korina Sanchez that she was meeting the issue head on. And then theatrically turning her face to the camera, she said: "You are a liar, Joey. You know what happened. I am ready to take a lie detector test."

Aquino said they fought over a "Mariz" who had been sending text messages over Marquez's mobile phone. She said she was convinced "Mariz" was a code.

Aquino added she flared up and there was a struggle. She said he beat her and she tried to fight back. She said she tried to grab his crotch "because I wanted to crush his genitals."

When the fight got messy and she called it quits with him, Aquino said Marquez pulled out his gun and cocked it. She said that was the time she really decided to end the relationship. With Joshua, her son from a former relationship with another actor, also married, and his yaya, they fled from his Essensa apartment unit—into the loving arms of her mom, former President Corazon Aquino, *mater dolorosa de las Filipinas.*

But on the other station, Marquez had a different story. Looking meek and defenseless, he said he had never laid a hand on Aquino and it was she who battered him. "I simply sat in one corner and took the beating from her," he said. "She said she would go to her mom and tell on me."

Suicidal

As in last Tuesday night when over the same TV show he suggested that Kris had psychologically abused him by threatening to tell on him "since the world would believe me right away," a suggestion that provoked Aquino to come out publicly, Marquez said Aquino was simply making the story up to "destroy" him.

Marquez urged Aquino to "simply say the truth and not create stories." He added that Aquino had "suicidal tendencies."

But Aquino had more serious charges against Marquez. She said she contracted STD from Marquez and it was the cause of her bleeding when she was rushed to the St. Luke's Hospital last March. She suggested that she was making the revelation to preempt the same revelation by Marquez, who she suggested would use the issue to paint her as a man-eater.

Jealousy

Perhaps anticipating a volley from Marquez's camp, Aquino disclosed Marquez had also been consumed by jealousy. She said at one time, he grabbed her mobile phone bill and threw it at her, which showed electronic text exchanges between her and comedian Vic Sotto, another older man whose marriage to another actress had just been annulled. She denied there was anything between her and Sotto.

She said she had long suggested to Marquez that they break up because of his womanizing, but he would refuse and put her down because she was "damaged goods." "Sinong lalaki ang tatanggap sa 'yo," she said he would tell her. "I was scarred for life."

But if she is not damaged goods, Aquino suggested that the scandal would destroy her flourishing show-biz career as television's Oprah Winfrey, Alex Trebec and Liz Smith all rolled into one.

Words of comfort

But Sanchez, Aquino's co-hostess in the morning talk show "Morning Girls," threw all newscaster's caution to the wind and cast aside the mask of journalistic objectivity to offer saccharine words of comfort. "On the contrary, I don't think you lost everything, Kris. With this incident, you've gained everything."

Definitely, the TV networks are gaining a lot from the scandal. Ratings have gone up. Last night, ABS-CBN extended "TV Patrol" past its 30-minute length so that Aquino could make her confession. The extended programming intruded into the time slot of the soap operas that followed the newscast.

But no matter. The newscast was soap opera in itself.

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'Iskul Bukol' at DepEd

From page A1

management style and irascible attitude towards the media.

De Jesus was confronting the author of the article which appeared in another broadsheet when a fist-sized ball of tissue paper hit the reporter in the face.

The "missile" came from another reporter quoted in the story.

The second reporter, who said he never gave such an opinion, followed his paper missile and made as if to punch the first reporter who forthwith apologized.

Some reporters began to laugh while others prepared to intervene in a fight.

Four DepEd officials who were at the press conference looked about to flee from the scene.

De Jesus himself looked as if he was torn between laughing and maintaining a poker face.

"(He) is throwing a tantrum, I am not," said De Jesus, who then returned to his tirade deploring certain journalistic practices.

He demanded that the first reporter and the other reporters cited in the story reveal what their "basis" was for claiming that he was "irritable."

The second reporter who was quoted in the story denied having described De Jesus as "irritable."

De Jesus told the first reporter that he should have been given the chance to air his side.

"That's Journalism 101," he said.

"Comments about my management style don't bother me. For one, what is the benchmark? I am said to have a harsh management style as against whom? Buddha, Jesus Christ, Atilla the Hun?" he continued.

It was the third time in a month that De Jesus has confronted reporters about a negative news story.

The two other articles concerned his supposed inaccessibility to media and the 5 a.m. work schedule that he reportedly imposed on the education and information division.

When the latter story first came out in the INQUIRER on Sept. 16, De Jesus protested that he never issued the order requiring some DepEd employees to report for work at 5 a.m. so they could furnish him with clippings of the day's news stories.

He said all he asked was for the EID staff to alert him about news stories that he needed to react to much earlier than usual.

After a week, the EID staff was told they could come to work at 6 a.m. The department's regular work hours start at 8 a.m.

Yesterday, De Jesus said the EID need not come in at 5 a.m. or 6 a.m. to alert him on controversial news stories.

"This is such a simple thing. Is it necessary for them to come at six? I don't think so… If they claim overtime [pay], I wouldn't approve it," he said.

He also took issue with the INQUIRER for putting the story on the front page.

"I cannot fathom why the schedule of a six-person unit in the department should merit a front-page report or should merit at all any media space given all the other problems education is facing," he said.

"It boggles the mind," said De Jesus, who besides being an educator is a reputable historian and writer.

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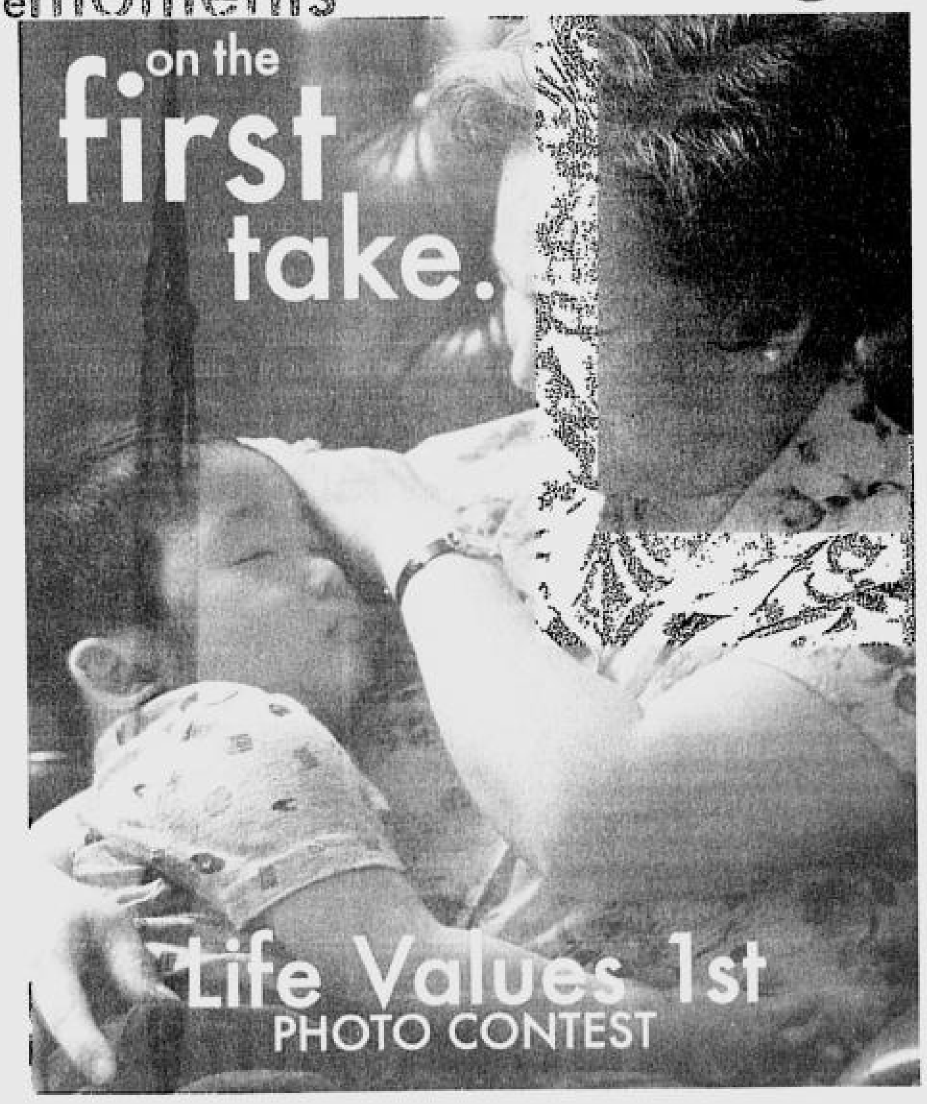

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Contest Dates

October 24, 2003 – deadline of entries (Entries must be received at the First Life Center, 174 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati no later than 5:00 pm)
November 27, 2003 – Awarding ceremonies at the Filipinas Heritage Library(FHL), Makati is by invitation only
November 27 to December 4, 2003 – Photo exhibit at the FHL Alcove.

Contest Guidelines

1. Contest is open to all amateur and professional photographers.
2. Contestants may submit more than one entry
3. Entries should:
   a. be colored photographs, 8x10 inches in size mounted on the black side of an illustration board
   b. be photographs taken in the past two years
   c. have a title placed under the picture or on the bottom part of the illustration board
   d. be submitted along with the completed registration form attached at the back of the mounted entry
4. The following entries will not be allowed:
   a. winning photographs from other contests
   b. digital or digitally enhanced photographs
   c. computer printouts
   d. previously published photographs

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Finalists will be invited to attend the awarding ceremonies on November 27, 2003 at the Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati City. Finalists must present their negatives (complete roll) for verification.

Retrieval & Retention

1. The winning prints shall become the property of First Guarantee Life Assurance Co., Inc. (First Life) with full rights to reproduce, exhibit or publish. The negatives of the top ten winners will be retained by First Life; other negatives will be returned. First Life reserves the right to publish or display a winning entry for promotional purposes, without remuneration of any kind to the owner of the photograph
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bush insists he was right on Iraq war

UNITED NATIONS—In the face of blistering criticism at the United Nations on Tuesday, US President George W. Bush defended the war on Iraq and his drive to stamp out the threat of international terrorism.

Bush's address to nearly 200 world leaders at the UN General Assembly was sandwiched between scathing attacks on the war from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and French President Jacques Chirac.

But Bush—who used his appearance last year to warn the world body that it risked becoming irrelevant by not backing the war to oust Saddam Hussein—said the war's aftermath had shown the United States was right to act.

"As we discover the killing fields and mass graves of Iraq, the true scale of Saddam's cruelty is being revealed," he said. "By helping the Iraqi people build a stable and peaceful country, we will make our own countries more secure."

The customary polite applause he received was nothing like the rousing cheer given moments before to Annan, who unleashed an unusually harsh attack on US "unilateralism" that he said was a threat to global security.

Annan said the Bush doctrine of "preemptive" war, established after the Sept. 11 attacks and implemented in Iraq, was set to undermine the system of international cooperation embodied in the United Nations.

"This logic represents a fundamental challenge to the principles on which, however imperfectly, world peace and stability have rested for the last 58 years," since the UN's creation, Annan said.

"The last 12 months have been painful for those of us who believe in collective answers to our common problems and challenges."

Speaking after Bush, Chirac—who spearheaded opposition to the war—said the US-led war had "shaken the multilateral system" and that there was no justification for a superpower to act alone.

"No one can be isolated, no one can act alone in everyone's name, and no one can accept the anarchy of a lawless society. There is no alternative to the United Nations," he said.

Despite Bush's call to "move forward" and leave behind the divisions at the UN Security Council in the buildup to the war, he and Chirac were unable to bridge their differences on what to do next in Iraq.

A 45-minute private meeting between the men failed to reach agreement on a US draft resolution for the Council that would authorize a multinational force in Iraq.

The French president wants an expanded UN role in Iraq and a much faster handover of power to Iraqis—a request that Bush explicitly rejected in his address.

"The primary goal of our coalition in Iraq is self-government for the people of Iraq, reached by orderly and democratic means," Bush said. "This process must unfold according to the needs of Iraqis, neither hurried nor delayed by the wishes of other parties."

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw of Britain, the main US ally on the war, said he had "no problem" with Chirac's call for sovereignty to be transferred to the Iraqi people as soon as possible but said that would not be any time soon.

"What we are interested in here are the practical realities," Straw said.

Chirac said there was some "convergence" with the US position and that, while differences remained, France was not trying to engineer a US failure in Iraq. *AFP*

Chirac not convinced

UNITED NATIONS—France's President Jacques Chirac said he and US President George W. Bush had failed to overcome their differences on the future of Iraq during a meeting here Tuesday.

The two met for 45 minutes at the US mission to the United Nations after spelling out their opposing views to the UN General Assembly on how to handle Iraq's reconstruction and transition to democracy.

Chirac told reporters that France and the United States shared the common goal of securing peace and rebuilding Iraq but added: "We also have differences."

Bush hopes a proposed UN Security Council resolution on Iraq will spur other nations to offer troops and money to the US-led effort to stabilize Iraq. Chirac wants the resolution to speed up the handover of sovereignty to an Iraqi government.

"We believe—and this is what I told President Bush—that today, the situation in Iraq is such that it is very difficult for Iraqis in general to accept a situation that, one way or another, is an occupation," he said.

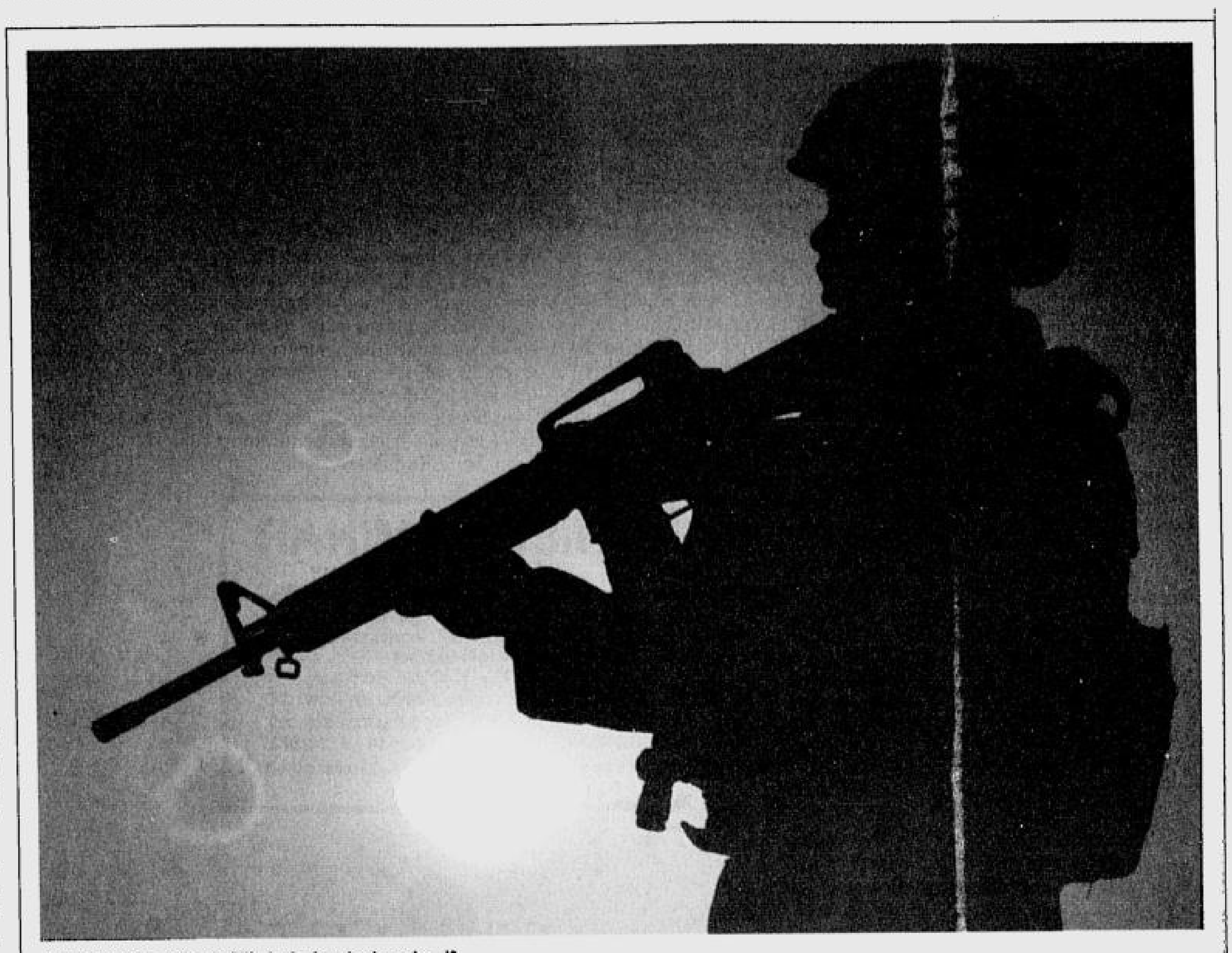
"We have to change tack," Chirac said, urging a quicker handover of power to Iraqis. "It will take a month, six months, nine months. I can't tell you exactly how long, but we have to take a decision today."

He said Iraqis were frustrated by the situation and that the international community should demonstrate a "clear will through a strong political gesture—in other words, the transfer of sovereignty."

In his speech to the assembly, Bush said that outside nations should not try to accelerate the handover of power, which he said had to be reached in "orderly and democratic" fashion.

"This process must unfold according to the needs of Iraqis, neither hurried nor delayed by the wishes of other parties," Bush said.

A senior US official who asked not to be named said Chirac, who spearheaded opposition to the war, had told Bush he "wouldn't stand in the way" of the resolution, which is currently being reworked by the United States. *AFP*



AMERICAN soldier in Tikrit: In for the long haul?

Iraq could cost US up to $400B

WASHINGTON—Occupying and rebuilding Iraq could cost American taxpayers $179 billion under even a best-case scenario and that could rise to more than $400 billion if US troops have to stay in the country for years to come, Democratic budget analysts forecast on Tuesday.

The report, by the Democratic staff of the House of Representatives budget committee, comes as Congress debates President George W. Bush's request for another $87 billion to fund military operations and reconstruction in Iraq.

With lawmakers eager to show their support for US troops under fire in Iraq, the package is expected to win relatively swift approval, even though it will push an already record federal budget deficit over $500 billion next year.

But Democrats have also seized on the chance to contrast the rising cost of US commitments abroad with Bush's insistence on holding down spending for domestic priorities like health care, education and homeland security.

"It's easy to say, as the president said: 'We will spend whatever it takes.' But it is fair to ask how much that is likely to be," said South Carolina Rep. John Spratt, the budget committee's top Democrat. *Reuters*

Arafat says US abetting crime against Palestinians

GAZA CITY—Yasser Arafat accused Washington of encouraging Israeli "crimes" against his people Tuesday as US President George W. Bush said the Palestinian people's cause had been betrayed by their veteran leader.

"The (Israeli) occupiers and the settlers are making the mistake of denying the existence of our people," Arafat said in a telephone address to Palestinian deputies gathered in Gaza City.

"Because of the arrogance of the force which is blindly supported and followed by certain powers, they are committing crimes against our people, our towns, our villages our (refugee) camps and our infrastructure," he said in an implicit reference to the United States.

His broadside came ahead of a speech by Bush to the United Nations General Assembly in which he called for the Palestinians to follow Iraq in developing democratic institutions, saying their cause had been "betrayed" by Arafat.

Arab nations had to cut off funding for Palestinian militant groups the United States has deemed "terrorist" organizations, he added, and Israel had to act to better the living conditions of the Palestinians to improve prospects for reaching a Middle East settlement. *AFP*

US translator caught spying in Guantanamo

WASHINGTON—An Air Force enlisted man has been charged with spying and aiding the enemy while working as an Arabic translator at the US base in Cuba where hundreds of suspected al-Qaida and Taliban prisoners are jailed, the Pentagon said on Tuesday.

Senior US Airman Ahmad al Halabi of Detroit, Michigan, is in jail at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, where he is charged with 32 counts, including espionage and other criminal violations, according to the Pentagon.

Defense officials said al Halabi, a 24-year-old Muslim, was found to have classified information on a computer in violation of strict security rules at the US Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The announcement came as the Pentagon also investigated possible espionage charges against Army Islamic chaplain James Yee, held in a military jail in South Carolina since Sept. 10.

No charges have been filed against Yee, who this year ministered to many of the 660 prisoners at Guantanamo.

Air Force Maj. Michael Shavers, a Pentagon spokesperson, said al Halabi knew Yee, but it was not clear whether the two arrests were linked.

Al Halabi is also charged with three counts of aiding the enemy as well as disobeying orders and making false official statements, according to Shavers.

"He served as an interpreter at Guantanamo for several months and was arrested on his return to the United States from Cuba," the spokesperson said.

NBC News said a 10-page indictment alleged al Halabi was carrying a laptop computer with 180 electronic notes, and two handwritten notes from detainees to be delivered to Syria and details about the US military installation at Guantanamo.

Citing US Defense Department officials, NBC reported that the airman's arrest was part of a wider investigation involving at least three other people. A Pentagon spokesperson was not immediately available for comment. *Reuters*

Vatican set to beatify Mother Teresa

VATICAN CITY—Vatican-issued [illegible], a display of her blood, and a musical and cartoon celebrating her life: These are some of the ways Mother Teresa's fans are honoring the nun who will take a step toward sainthood when she is beatified next month.

Factories are churning out Mother Teresa rosaries, crucifixes and key chains ahead of the Oct. 19 beatification, and on Tuesday a line snaked around the Vatican post office for a new set of postcard stamps bearing her image.

The preparations are steaming ahead at a breathtaking pace, which seems only natural, since Mother Teresa is on the fast track for sainthood.

Born Agnes Gonxhe Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Macedonia, Mother Teresa died Sept. 5, 1997, in India, where she spent most of her life caring for the poorest in Calcutta's slums.

A year after she died, Pope John Paul II waived the normal five-year waiting period for the beatification process to begin, convinced of her saintliness and apparently intent on at least beatifying her in his lifetime.

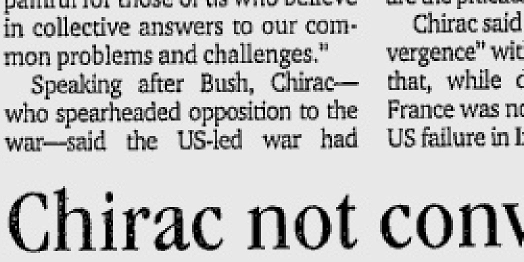
Last year, the Pope approved a miracle credited to her intercession; a second miracle is needed for her to be made a saint. He scheduled her beatification ceremony for the weeklong festivities surrounding his 25th anniversary as pope—an honor clearly reserved for someone close to his heart.

The Rev. Brian Kolodiejchuk, the Canadian postulator pushing through Mother Teresa's cause, said the speed of the investigation was intentional.

"I think it's no secret that he wanted to have the joy of doing that beatification," Kolodiejchuk said of the Pope. "That was one reason why the exemption was made, besides just all the requests."

Kolodiejchuk stressed that he and colleagues from Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity and the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints completed a full beatification dossier, interviewing 113 people when the norm is 50, and gathering 35,000 pages of documentation attesting to the virtuous life of the Nobel Peace Prize winner. *AP*

It's go for Oct. 7 California recall



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER: The show, er... the elections, must go on

SAN FRANCISCO—A US appeals court on Tuesday ruled that California's recall vote should take place as originally scheduled on Oct. 7, ending one emotional and unpredictable fight and leaving politicians just two weeks to finish up their own emotional and unpredictable battle.

An 11-member panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco unanimously overturned a decision by three of its judges last week to postpone the recall vote until March 2004, when computer technology is scheduled to replace antiquated punch card voting machines.

The American Civil Liberties Union, the group that brought the suit to delay the election, said it would not appeal the decision to the US Supreme Court because "with the election just two weeks away, we do not believe we should prolong the uncertainty any longer."

The 9th Circuit noted the great disruption a postponement would have at such a late date. State election officials said 669,067 voters had already cast absentee ballots as of Tuesday and the state had spent about $50 million organizing the contest.

"Interference with impending elections is extraordinary... and interference with an election after voting has begun is unprecedented," the court ruled.

"The decision to enjoin an impending election is so serious that the Supreme Court has allowed elections to go forward even in the face of an undisputed constitutional violation."

Democratic Gov. Gray Davis, 60, is fighting to keep his job after three decades in California politics. "I think they made the right decision," he said.

Nipping at his heals is bodybuilder-turned-actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who is hoping to transfer popular discontent with politics to complete his third major career change. *Reuters*

Legs conceal smuggled snakes

SYDNEY—A Swedish man tried to smuggle eight dangerous snakes into Australia by strapping them to his legs, customs officials said Wednesday.

Justice Minister Chris Ellison said the 28-year-old man, whose name was not released, arrived at Sydney airport from Thailand on Monday night. He was searched by customs officers who discovered the reptiles in packages strapped to his calves.

The snakes—which included four deadly King Cobras—were handed over to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service. The other snake species were not released. *AP*

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Priests and sinners

EDITORIAL

THE SAD news is that 34 Catholic priests have been suspended for sexual misconduct. The bad news is that there are scores, possibly hundreds, of others on whose heads the axe will fall. And the worst news is that there may be many who are getting away with just the mildest of reprimands from their superiors.

In one diocese, 20 priests who had been accused of sexual harassment were suspended by their bishop, Fr. James Reuter, director of the National Office of Mass Media, announced last week . In another diocese, 14 were similarly punished by their bishops.

Reuter didn't say why the Church hierarchy decided to issue that piece of news. But if it was meant to appease a public that has increasingly grown concerned over the sexual transgressions of bishops, priests and religious, it didn't achieve its purpose.

The Catholic Church in the Philippines has 50 dioceses and 17 archdioceses. One or two may have the good fortune of having saintly priests serving all their parishes. But it would tax any Filipino's credulity to say that all the priests in more than 60 sees have been faithful to their vow of chastity.

While it may be inaccurate to extrapolate from the very little data released so far, the exercise would give some idea of the magnitude of the problem facing the Church. If the lower number of 14 offenders can be taken as the norm for every diocese, close to a thousand priests are bound to be found guilty of sexual misconduct in the weeks ahead.

Of course, the assumption here is that, like the two bishops, all the other bishops and archbishops have the inclination and the will to discipline their erring brothers in the cloth. Regrettably, there are some who cannot bring themselves to do so.

The INQUIRER's Ceres Doyo narrated in two of her recent columns the story of a priest who drugged and raped a Protestant church worker and claimed the pleasure he forcibly took from her several times was "God's bonus." When he found out that he got her pregnant, he persuaded her to have an abortion. She went to his bishop and asked that the priest be stripped of his position and defrocked. The bishop believed her story but just talked of letting the priest make "reparation."

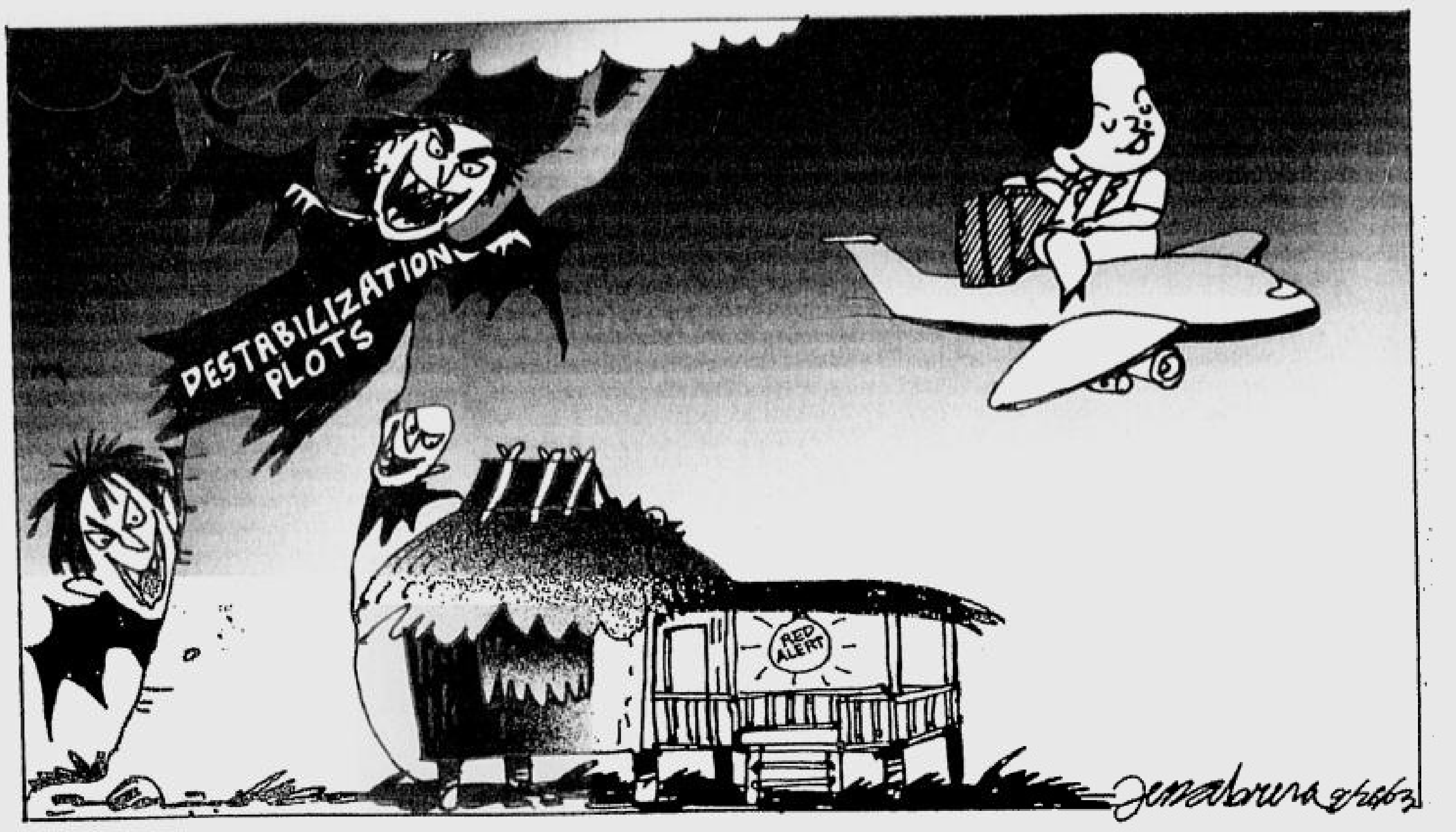
Here's a crime—two crimes in fact: rape and murder (for that is what abortion is in the eyes of the Church)—that cries to heaven for vengeance, and all the bishop would mete out as punishment is a transfer to another parish. And he calls that justice?

When a priest commits rape or any other form of sexual abuse, he sins three times over: first, against the victim of his violence; second, against society which has conferred on him a place of honor and respectability; and finally, against God before whom he made a vow of chastity. How can any responsible Church official dismiss such a terrible crime with a wink? And how can a shepherd set loose among his flock a wolf in sheep's clothing?

To keep the Church from being tainted by scandal, Church leaders often hush up great crimes. Where outrage is called for, they would rather sweep everything under the rug. To protect the Church, they would protect even the worst offenders. And when scandal does break out, the official Church response is to challenge those who are without sin to cast the first stone.

Such a defensive public posture coupled with a tolerant and forgiving attitude toward offenders dooms all efforts at reform.

As the Filipino bishops discuss a new protocol for dealing with sexual misconduct by priests, it might help if they bear in mind what Jesus said about anyone who scandalizes the little ones: it would be better that a millstone be tied around his neck and he be cast into the sea. Before meaningful reforms can take place, Church leaders should see rape and other forms of sexual abuse as the ugly and contemptible crimes that they really are, demanding the most severe punishment. They should look at the offending priests as criminals who first should be brought to justice before they can find forgiveness. Where the worst offenders are simply admonished to go and sin no more, they are most likely to sin some more and invite others to follow their example.



Cha-cha will remove patrimony provision

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE INSISTENCE by our congressmen to change the Constitution could be the first step to sell our country to foreigners. It is no secret that one provision to be erased from the Charter is the patrimony clause. This is the provision that says only Filipinos can own land, exploit our natural resources, buy property that has historical roots and own mass media organizations; public utilities must be majority owned by Filipinos. They are all off limits to foreigners under the present Constitution.

With the advent of the World Trade Organization, however, a number of countries, notably the United States, Japan, Singapore and the European Union, have asked the Philippines to strike off this patrimony provision. The justification is that it would attract foreign investment and develop the country. But without that, Filipinos would just be slaves in their own country. They would only be the workers, the serfs, while rich foreigners own the lands, the seas and even the skies above the Philippines. They wouldn't be able to afford land on which to farm and build their homes as the influx of foreigners drive prices up.

Foreigners can cut our forests, dig up the mountains for minerals, fish our seas and even drill the seabed for oil and natural gas. Already, some traitorous Filipinos have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to issue an executive order opening Philippine skies to foreign airlines.

We have already allowed Filipino immigrants and permanent residents abroad to vote in Philippine elections and given them rights not given to Filipinos who have chosen to stay in their native country. We have allowed those who have already acquired foreign citizenship to have dual citizenship. We can't sell our agricultural and manufactured products in our own country because of the invasion of foreign-made products. The removal of the patrimony provision would complete the takeover of the Philippines by foreigners.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona who was the guest at Monday's Kapihan sa Manila, along with Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo Jr., has warned his fellow Filipinos of this plot. For that, his party mates want to expel him from Lakas, the party of which he is the president, as punishment. Is Lakas composed of traitors? Is the House of Representatives which is pushing Charter change, composed of traitors?

The congressmen also want a Charter change because they want a shift to a parliamentary government where they, the congressmen, would run not only the legislature but the whole government. Right now, they have already usurped the functions of some executive departments, notably the Department of Public Works and Highways, with the pork barrel. The function of Congress under the present Constitution is to legislate, but each legislator has been made into a de facto DPWH by giving him the authority to identify public works projects and release the funds. With a shift to the parliamentary system, the takeover by the legislature of the whole government, the judiciary included, would also be completed.

One of the reasons for our underdevelopment is graft and corruption, where money intended for pubic service is diverted to private pockets, mainly belonging to politicians and government officials. An international body has rated the Philippines as the third most corrupt nation in Asia, an odious reputation that our President has dismissed as "old hat." Old hat or not, the corruption is there because we keep electing the same politicians. Shift to a parliamentary system but retain the same politicians and we would climb to the top of the corruption ratings.

Two Asian nations whose prime ministers have been convicted and imprisoned for massive corruption, Japan and South Korea, have parliamentary governments. Vice President Guingona told the Kapihan that recently an official of Pakistan, which also has a parliamentary government, admitted that his country is "very corrupt."

True, it is not the system that makes a nation corrupt; it is the lack of morality of its officials. And that is the reason a parliamentary system is not for us. Our high rating in the corruption scale is inversely proportional to the low rating in the morality scale of our politicians and officials.

It is also true that corruption is also very bad in our present presidential system. However, a parliamentary system will make it worse. In a presidential system, each corrupt individual is responsible and punished for his acts. In a parliamentary system, responsibility rests with the party. Conspiracy is the name of the game. Co-conspirators give the corrupt courage to steal. They also protect one another.

* * *

INCIDENTAL INTELLIGENCE—Attention Bureau of Customs: A relative of a very high government official has brought in through the Subic Freeport 34 thoroughbred horses from Australia. They are now in the San Lazaro stables, according to reports. The freight charges alone totaled $75,000. What about the acquisition cost of the 34 racing horses and the customs duties and taxes on them?

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Woman waiting outside a phone booth: "Excuse me, sir, you've had the phone for the past 20 minutes but you haven't said a word."

Man: "*Puwede ba*, I'm talking to my wife."

'Moro-moro'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

OH, but she'll run. There's never been any doubt about it.

First, it was George Bush Jr. Then it was Malaysian Premier Mahathir Mohammad. Then it was Korean President Kim Dae-jung. Those were the people presumably telling Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to run in the elections next year.

Now, it's God—or it will soon be.

I don't know why we use the term *moro-moro* to refer to a charade, or subterfuge. As far as I know, Moros do not like to invoke Allah to mount something deceitful. They do not worry about lightning striking them dead where they stand—that is a Christian thing; they just take their God and their religion deathly seriously. As far as I know, it's Christians who like invoking Jehovah to commit all sorts of crimes and to propagate all sorts of lies. Even if the Second Commandment, as transmitted by Moses, is for the faithful not to use His name in vain. I presume "vain" does not mean "futile" but "self-serving," as in "vanity." But I leave the theologians to correct me there. The sense should be clear anyway: Don't screw around and say, "Praise the Lord."

A century ago, another Christian sought God's help to betray something very fundamental, which was the legacy handed down to him by his country's founding fathers. His name was William McKinley. His founding fathers had left him with a prodigious tradition, one that said all peoples had the right to freedom and self-determination, and may therefore not be invaded and enslaved. It was a tradition divinely inspired, Americans like Mark Twain kept reminding him.

McKinley however had a problem: the people around him wanted an imperial adventure to protect and expand their business interests. A thing that went against democratic tenets. To solve the impasse, he went straight up to God.

One night, goes his now famous story, he prayed for divine guidance. And lo and behold, God spoke to him and told him to liberate the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico from the Spaniards, none of God's angels apparently informing Him that Spanish rule was tottering in most of those countries because of local revolutions. God further told him to liberate the Indios not just from the Spaniards but from themselves, or from their savagery by smiting their heads with the civilizing force of the krag.

The result was the launching of one of the most savage campaigns in the history of colonialism and the making of a brutalized people who eventually learned to love their chains. We have so learned to love our chains that we keep exhibiting them even now to our Asian neighbors, asking to them to admire the craftsmanship.

Like McKinley, GMA has a problem. That problem is that she is bound not to run next year by something so fundamental, something that lies at the foundation of this culture. Which is one's word. She has promised not to run again. She did so moreover at a time when the public had lost great trust in her, compelling her to make that decision. As a result of that decision, she regained in part the public trust she had lost. If she betrays it, she stands to lose it once more. And with a vengeance because this culture looks down on people who have no binding word. Of course, GMA can always say she never entered into a "gentleman's agreement" with the nation, only a "lady's agreement." But that will piss off the ladies as well.

But the people around her want an electoral misadventure to protect and expand their power and privileges. More than that, she herself wants to embark on the electoral misadventure from a feeling of manifest destiny. How to get around the hurdle? Turn to God.

I can't say I blame her entirely. Why should Jaime Cardinal Sin, Mike Velarde and Eraño Manalo have exclusive access to God? Why should we believe them when they say they alone are God's appointed messengers or translators of the divine language? GMA can always quote the feminists and say that if God has any gender, it is probably female, given that we impute infinite wisdom to Him—or Her. That being the case, God would be more inclined to talk politics, or share *tsismis*, with Gloria than anybody else.

It is not unlikely that she will make the announcement after she visits the Pope, the better to give it divine resonance. Thankfully, neither she nor her husband Mike Arroyo need fear a lightning bolt will end their *moro-moro* there. That is not because even Moors are welcome in the Vatican, that is because if God sent lightning bolts to incinerate crooks and liars, the Vatican itself would be sorely depleted. The Italians did not put a lock on the papacy by leaving things entirely in God's hands. Or maybe they did leave things entirely in God's hands in the sense that GMA means it. In the hands of the God only they can talk to.

Let me suggest a few things GMA's handlers might say in announcing the turnaround. Use the word "humbly," as in "I humbly accept God's will"—it always helps to be humble before God. Use as well "bow down to" as in "I am bowing down to the people's will"—it always helps to make the thing a force majeure, and to invoke the people even if they are in the streets "destabilizing" government. Throw in "responsibility" and "duty" while at it, as in "I cannot shirk the responsibility and duty to run"—it's always nice to be responsible and duty-conscious. Best of all, use McKinley's favorite word, "burden," as in "I will gladly carry this burden"—it always helps to suggest you are groaning under the weight of the very thing you have been desperately craving from Day One.

There's only one problem: McKinley succeeded after dragging this country through hell. GMA will fail despite dragging this country through hell.

I can't understand why we attribute duplicity and treachery to Moros.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Interesting inter-play

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IT came as no surprise that Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Eduardo Ermita was appointed defense secretary, for the President had not been too secretive about her preference. Moreover, Ermita is most familiar with this post, having served as defense undersecretary to Fidel Ramos. In addition, Ermita, who retired as AFP vice chief of staff, has been away from the military for over a decade now, during which he served in various civilian posts. Thus, he is a happy compromise for those advocating someone from the civilian sector to oversee the AFP.

His added advantage is his familiarity with the Mindanao problem. His involvement started when as an army colonel, he served as aide to the late Rep. Carmelo Barbero, President Marcos' chief negotiator in the MNLF rebellion who was involved in drawing up the Tripoli Agreement in 1976. In the mid-1990s, Ermita was again involved in the negotiations with the MNLF brokered by Jakarta. At the time of his appointment to the DND, he was thick in the peace process as the government's point man in the talks with the MILF which are about to resume in Kuala Lumpur.

But while familiarity with the secessionist problem in Mindanao is a decided advantage for Ermita, he has to be conscious that his perspective on the peace process now has to change somewhat, to reflect the demands of the Armed Forces.

* * *

Sen. Panfilo Lacson has made known his intention to deliver his third "bombshell" against First Gentleman Mike Arroyo when the Senate resumes session on Oct. 6. "Whetting the public's appetite for blood," as Sen. Joker Arroyo put it, he promises to talk about even bigger scandals. However, the problem, which the Senate now realizes only too well, is that Lacson's first two "bombshells" remain unsubstantiated and all the banks that claimed to have Jose Pidal accounts singly or jointly with members of the Toh family have denied the existence of such accounts. The private individuals Lacson has maligned have also sued him in court. On top of it, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, which he had accused of depositing public funds in the Pidal account, has denied it and even filed a complaint before the ethics committee.

Now Lacson is about to unleash more accusations even without being able to prove his previous allegations. Should the Senate allow him to go into a new mud-slinging spree, given his poor record of truthfulness in his two previous exposés? Is the privilege speech bound by no restraints as regards veracity and responsibility? As INQUIRER reader Jun Pasimio recently put it in a strong letter to the editor, "Must the senators continue to be the lapdogs of Lacson?"

* * *

The problem with the Marcos Swiss deposits is that too many eyes are hot on them. The Singapore branch of the German bank WestLB A.G. recently said it would not release the $22 million invested by the Philippine National Bank until a competent court in the island state rules on it. This is, of course, a crazy position for this bank is merely a custodian of those funds, not its owner. Before this, the Swiss dummy of the Marcoses, Patrick Foetisch, already wrote to the foreign banks holding those deposits for the PNB, including the WestLB branch, asking them not to allow the PNB to withdraw the money. All the foreign banks ignored Foetisch, except WestLB.

Along came Marcos lawyer James Linn and lawyer Robert Swift, who represents one faction of the human rights victims, Claimants 1081 led by Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales. They went to US District Judge Manuel Real in Hawaii, who issued his Sept. 2, 2003 "worldwide injunction" against the release the Marcoses' ill-gotten wealth. Irene Marcos-Araneta and Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sent Real's order to their Swiss lawyer, Bruno de Preux (whose firm also lawyers for the brother of Osama bin Laden). Armed with the order, De Preux asked the Swiss government to reconsider its decision releasing the money deposited in escrow with the PNB, but the Swiss government ignored it.

* * *

The interaction among the Marcos *dramatis personae* is fascinating. For instance, since 1986, Real has displayed extraordinary generosity toward Swift, granting all of his motions, even those made by telephone. Now going further, Real has deputized Swift as his "sheriff" to serve his injunction on banks abroad. On the other hand, the Marcoses and Swift are now working together because they have the same objective: Swift is claiming $40 million in attorney's fees (apart from what his Filipino partner Rod Domingo is claiming), while the Marcoses want to get the rest of the $683 million through Real.

Interestingly, Swift claims to represent one faction of human rights victims led by Rosales. But with the way Swift and the Marcoses have been working together, some observers feel the victims should now be asked if they still consider themselves "anti-Marcos activists." Their lawyer certainly isn't, since he has repeatedly claimed before Real that the Marcoses "own" the $683 million.

The following questions are worth pondering over: Do the victims want to be compensated for human rights violations committed by the Marcos dictatorship against them, with money illegally gotten by the Marcoses themselves? And by a US judge who has called our Supreme Court "uncivilized"? And through a lawyer who says the Marcoses tortured Filipinos, but did not steal anything from the people?

Young voters step up

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE of the sponsors of last week's "1081: Rakrakan para sa Kalayaan" was a group called White Forum. When I asked what the group was about, I was pointed toward a table at the end of the row of tables which we, indentured servants of pagbabago@pilipinas, were manning, selling iced tea, coffee and lemonade, snacks and pagbabago stuff like CDs, caps and stickers. The young people at the White Forum table weren't selling anything but were giving away flyers informing young voters about the forthcoming elections and the registration process for both first-time and veteran voters.

But why White Forum? The name was apparently suggested by Nico Penafiel, a youth leader from De La Salle University, since white "denotes unity… representing the presence of all colors." Also, "white is simple and signifies the cleanliness and purity of intentions of its proponents, the idealistic youth. Above all, white represents the nonpartisan nature of the group that seeks to distinguish itself from those with political affiliations and other interest groups."

The White Forum has just launched the "R-18" campaign, to ensure the participation of young people in the 2004 national elections. Their arguments are persuasive:

In next year's elections, voters aged 18-35 will make up 62 percent of the voting population. If united, the votes of young people "can make a difference in realizing the vision of a renewed Philippines. Only a concerted effort among different groups of youth and adults will make this possible."

But first, young people, especially first-time voters, need to register before they can vote and thereby change the world—if that's at all possible. Which is why the R-18 campaign is concentrating, for now, on mobilizing everyone who's voting for the first time, just turned 18 or will be 18 by May 2004, to register. Even previously registered voters are urged to drop by the nearest Comelec office for validation, given the new computerized procedures.

* * *

FIRST-TIME voters have until Oct. 31 to register, while registered voters have until Dec. 12 to validate their registration. Comelec offices in city or municipal halls are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. from Monday to Sunday for registration and validation.

Registrants and voters need to bring the following: two copies of the Comelec registration form, and any valid ID card that contains a picture, the signature of the ID holder, the signature of the issuing authority, and if possible, one's present address.

Even if you were able to vote during the previous election, you still need to validate your name in the voters' list. The Comelec has said that previous voters will still be able to vote come May even without validation, but the process will be more complicated as verification will have to be carried out then and there.

Other tips in the White Forum materials:

First-time voters are urged to bring a copy of their birth certificates. To facilitate registration, photocopy your ID and the Comelec forms beforehand and fill them up before going to your local Comelec office. Women who got married after their first registration should bring their marriage contract and submit a petition for change of name using the prescribed Comelec form.

* * *

DURING the "1081" Concert, the White Forum showed an R-18 public service ad directed at young voters that drew an enthusiastic response from the audience. Created with the help of the DYR ad agency, the ad shows one hand held up, while a voice intones that three out of every five voters are young people. As three fingers of the hand are folded down, the remaining two fingers—the forefinger and thumb, resembling a gun—are held against a young person's head. If the youth don't vote responsibly, the ad says, then we might as well give up the country for dead.

"The R-18 Campaign is geared to awaken the youth and motivate them to register for the 2004 elections, through the various media (TV, print, text, Internet) and events such as focus-group discussions and gimmicks," the material states. "It is a campaign open to all who share the stated goals and commit themselves to remaining nonpartisan in the conduct of (the) activities. It is an invitation issued to all like-minded groups and individuals to be part of a concerted effort to achieve a meaningful change in society through a responsible and credible electoral exercise."

There, young people have spoken and proven themselves committed to renewal and change through responsible voting. I guess the rest is up to the older generation to respond to this overture and show the youth that this country is worth their time, their energies and their loyalty.

* * *

DISCOVER what Negros Occidental has to offer when it takes its turn at the "Best of the Regions" program of the Department of Tourism at Intramuros.

Slated from Sept. 29 to Oct. 12, the Negros Occidental showcase will feature the province's major festivals: the Babaylan and Cannon festival of Bago City; Pasasalamat Drumbeaters of La Carlota; Minuluan Festival of Talisay; and the world-renowned Masskara Festival of Bacolod. Products from the Association of Negros Producers will also be showcased, as will its famous food items and delicacies.

Perhaps the highlight of the two-week feast will be "Negros Day" on Oct. 5, during which Negrenses residing in Manila are invited to troop to Intramuros and rediscover the wealth of their home province.

Gov. Joseph Maranon has made local tourism one of his major thrusts to spur the province's development, and so far, the increasing number of visitors to the province indicates Negros is on its way to becoming a prime tourist destination.

OPA

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THE OVERSEAS labor diaspora has spawned sociological, psychological, economic and political issues. It has altered the Filipino landscape, the family structure and even our mindset. It has even expanded our vocabulary.

Many new words have been coined to describe and define situations that were not part of our way of life a couple of decades ago. Japayuki, Japino, (Japanese-Filipino offspring), TNT or *bilog* (undocumented worker), OCW which later became OFW, DH, OPA. Some of these names started out as neutral or euphemisms but eventually acquired a pejorative meaning. Much the same way that *muchacha* (which simply means girl) became maid became househelp *(katulong)* became DH (domestic helper). Last we learned DH is trying to become HM (house manager).

The word entertainer has now acquired a negative load. Those who go abroad to earn as "cultural" entertainers (by dancing, singing, or going out with their male customers) are now called overseas performing artists or OPA, never mind that most of them trained to be "artists" for only a few weeks before landing in Japan's night spots.

How define artist? What does it take to be an artist? Artists of note are not protesting the way the word is being loosely used lest they be called snobs.

Bureaucrats who invented the phrase say O-P-A, while many Filipinos now simply say *opa* which sounds similar to *upa* (hire) or *paupahan* (for hire) which, sadly, has been the fate of countless Filipino women who ended up in the snare of international sex traffickers.

Last week the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) held a "Conference on Overseas Performing Artists in Japan" the highlight of which was the presentation of the research results on OPA in the Land of the Rising Sun.

Japan, according to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) is one of the top five destinations of overseas Filipinos workers (OFW) most of whom are women. In 2002, of the 73,245 Japan-bound OFW, 69,896 were women OPA. Only a few hundreds went to other countries. Japan is still OPA country.

The CHR-DAWN research showed that economics is still the major push factor for women to become OPA. But this is not new. What is disturbing is that women who have become aware of the dangers (having worked in Japan several times) still go again and again. The women themselves cited the cause of their fears, among them, discrimination, the problem of culture and falling into the hands of the Yakuza and other denizens of Japan's underworld.

Now that the labor department has lowered the age requirement from 21 to 18, more young women are inclined to go, some even admitting to falsifying their documents and faking their age in order to leave.

Respondents pointed to the recruitment agencies and talent managers as mainly responsible for getting their papers approved, paying for predeparture expenses ranging from P5,000 to P50,000 which are later deducted from their salaries. Those who are not able to immediately get a booking in Japan stay on with the agencies. This means continued training and expenses.

Training is required before the "artist" gets her Artist Record Book (ARB) which is needed for visa application. The CHR-DAWN research said that close to one-fifth of their respondents have had to train in different clubs and karaoke bars in Makati, Pasay and Quezon City which cater to Japanese clients. The majority admitted doing work of a "typical guest relations officer." We know what GRO work means.

What bothers me is the fact that not one among the 70 OPA interviewed was able to give details about the contracts they had signed before they left for Japan. Only two remembered the exact salary mentioned in their contracts.

The CHR-DAWN research classified their respondents as first timers and "timers" (those who have gone to Japan a number of times).

"About 71 percent of the 77 'timers' and returnees said they were made to go out on *dohan* (afternoon dates) with their customers. Of these, 56 percent tried to refuse while the others said they took advantage of the extra income from the *dohan*. The 13 percent claimed they were asked or forced to engage in sexual activities during the afternoon dates."

About 35 percent of the respondents were made to do "flying bookings" (transferring from one venue to another) but 19 percent tried to refuse. Those who agreed said they merely followed orders. Promoters took the OPA's passports upon their arrival. Singing and dancing were not the only entertaining they did. They served drinks, sat with their customers or stood outside the bars to invite customers in. Some never had to perform in a show. Being intimate with the customers, the respondents said, was part of the job.

The salary ranges from $350 to $500 a month. Some even earn as high as $1,500. How lucky can some get.

I have with me a copy of the contract signed by a returning OPA which shows that she was supposed to receive $300 a month for a six-month stay in Japan. She also signed an agreement authorizing her agency to deduct $296 representing cash advance.

When she returned she found a handwritten insertion on her contract that said the agency was supposed to deduct a $250-"commission" every month for five months ($1,250). This plus the $296 cash advance equals $1,546.

In six months this OPA was supposed to earn $1,800. The agency took $1,546, leaving her with $254. $254—that's all she earned for six months of gyrating in Japan. That's about $42 a month. The rest was supposed to come in the form of tips.

This Malate-based agency, a member of the Philippine Association of Service Exporters Inc. (Pasei), has some explaining to do.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Mom in the mirror

YOUNG BLOOD

Denise Gabrielle Alcasid Sese

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WHY is it that we always have a great sense of appreciation for all mothers except our own? On television, mothers come with every diaper, fabric conditioner, laundry detergent, vitamin and even shampoo commercial. There are movies such as "Stop or My Mom Will Shoot" or "Tanging Ina" celebrating the essential service mothers give to us. But when my friends talk about their mothers, I hear words like "nagger," "closed-minded," "demanding" and (the most often used adjective) "crazy."

I cannot relate to any of these images of mothers. My mother is not a typical one. She is short, slender and very trendy. She can wear a sack and still make it look chic. In the mall, she is often approached by strangers and asked where she gets her unique hairstyle and original clothes. And to my embarrassment, there have been many times when she was asked whether she was my older sister or, would you believe, younger sister!

She doesn't do typical mom stuff like preparing *merienda*, cooking dinner and fussing over your posture. But she's very good at making my friends laugh with her sarcastic humor, bluntness and sometimes downright tactlessness. I don't know if she can get the dirt off white shirts using the right laundry detergent like those mothers on television, but one thing I know is that I have the best mom I could have asked for.

I remember her doing the typical mom things when I was a child. She read me stories, tucked me in bed, made me watch educational "kiddie" shows with idiotic mascots who said ridiculous things, and taught me that it was wrong to tell someone she was fat to her face (even if she really was).

But what sets her apart from most other moms is that she has always treated me as if I were an adult. There is no pulling of rank in our relationship. Ours is simply a relationship between a loved one and another loved one.

When I was 11 years old, my mother made a decision that would change our lives forever. She decided to separate from my father and have their marriage annulled.

This was the time when ours transcended most mother-daughter relationships. She and I became partners, helping each other raise my younger brother so that we could cope with our new family roles. Because she had to play a bigger, dual role of mother and father, she had complete freedom to raise us the way she wanted to.

In my early teenage years, my friends envied me for having a mom who allowed her daughter to talk to boys and smoke—yes, smoke cigarettes. She was candid enough to tell me several times that when she was my age she would cut classes to smoke in the park with her boyfriend. Perhaps this was the reason I never tried smoking or cut classes.

Mom believes that every person should celebrate life by living it. And though she may have done things in the past she was not proud of, these for her were necessary mistakes that helped make her what she is now.

The curious thing is that while mom is as liberated as anyone can be, she has ended up with prudish children. Perhaps reverse psychology is at work in our case, because even if she encourages my brother and me to get drunk once in a while, we don't. Once she even dared me to steal something just for fun.

All this may look like a crazy thing for any parent to do, but all she is really doing is being a "real" person. She never pretends to know more than what she does and she never defines which actions are right and wrong. And because she lives her life so openly, I have learned to live my life using the lessons she has learned from hers. That is what makes my mom real to me.

My fondest memory of her goes back to that time when I was a senior in high school. Then she wrote me a letter that read in part: "When I grow up, I want to be just like you."

To me, mom is more than a mother and more than a friend. When I look at her, I see all the things I want to be.

Her charm only comes second to her sincerity, which is the one trait that attracts so many people to her. She taught us to see goodness in people by seeing goodness in them herself. She taught us the importance of strength by being herself a strong person. And though my brother and I make fun of her for crying at some sappy movies and for laughing at corny jokes, we would never trade our mom for anyone else.

People say that in order to know if your future children will be good-looking, take a good look at your mother-in-law. If you want to know whether you will have fat thighs when you're older, take a good look at your mother.

But we are more than just bearers of our parent's genes. We are reflections of our parents. They make up who we are and influence who we choose to be. Each time I look at myself, I see a part of my mom.

What makes my mom more than just a wonderful parent is not her ability to raise children as a single mom. It is not her success in dividing her time between her career and her family. It is not her readiness to admit that she doesn't have all the answers to our questions. Rather it is the love and trust she instilled in us from day one. Her being a human mom with human faults gives us a deeper understanding of humanity.

Whenever I watch TV and hear those Downy mommies gushing over how their children thanked them for their newly washed, floral-scented clothes, I think of my own mom. Then I realize that mothers no longer live for themselves alone; they help their children live their own lives as well.

Denise Gabrielle Alcasid Sese, 19, is a BS Psychology sophomore at the University of the Philippines in Diliman. She promises to raise her children the same way her mom raised her.

THEY SAID

Silenced hands

"We are suffering in silence. But we can't ask questions because our hands are tied."

—Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo on the supposed demoralization of Lakas party mates amid the Jose Pidal controversy involving First Gentleman Mike Arroyo

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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Facts on oak wood

MUCH has been said about that infamous military uprising in one of the posh hotels in Makati last month, but what exactly is an oak wood?

Just like a coco lumber which is extracted from the main trunk of a coco palm tree, an oak wood is a major end-product of a matured oak tree.

In the United States, the oak tree, whether it is white, red, burr or cork, is one of the tree species found within two of its three forest types—the Temperate Hardwood Forest in the northeast and the sub-tropical Evergreen Forest in the southwest. Since its small pores, or openings, are lined up straight from the tree's heartwood up to its sapwood and due to its aromatic smell and eventual resistance to wood-boring insects, oak wood is the most popular material for the manufacture of wooden barrels which are essential . in aging world-quality branded wines.

According to "The Illustrated Science and Invention Encyclopedia (Volume 23, Pages 3,162-3,167), one of the stages of winemaking is called maturation wherein wines, when placed inside the barrel, mature by breathing a small amount of oxygen through the thin straight pores of the oak wood. The wine's period of maturation may vary from the normal 18 months up to two years. That would probably explain why those wines aged much longer are finer and stronger since they are more seasoned and matured.

According to the "Lexicon of Philippine Trees," we have 15 species of oak trees which include the apo oak, celebes oak, mabesa oak and vidal oak, among others. All belong to the woody plant family Fagaceae under the genus Lithocarpus. Local oak woods are most commonly known as the *ulayan*, especially in the Visayas. They are either used as indoor panelings, furniture wood or firewood. But just like the few remaining dipterocarp tree species of the country, like the *yakal, apitong, guiho, tangile*, etc. and the premium tree species of *narra, kalantas, banuyo, akle, lanete* and *almaciga* of which the Philippine oak trees are always associated with, they are also endangered by the "mutinous" illegal loggers, poachers, charcoal makers and slash-and-burn farmers who disregard the trees' continued existence for selfish interests.

—ROSELLER E. CAY,
Blk. 16, Lot 27,
Kassel Homes Subd.,
Tacloban City

Outrage over Pala's killing swells

ON SEPT. 6, 2003, a hail of gunfire punctuated the otherwise quiet evening in a suburb of Davao City. Juan Porras Pala Jr., a radio commentator, was gunned down—the sixth media person to be murdered in the country this year. This incident brings to an alarming total the atrocities committed against the members of Philippine media—over 40 journalists killed since 1986. This situation is appalling.

It is with deep regret that we, the officers and members of the Federation of Provincial Press Clubs of the Philippines (FPPCP) and the Publishers League of the Philippines (PELP), note this latest incident—where another colleague has again fallen victim to violence, even as justice for others like him continues to be elusive.

While there are many angles that can be construed surrounding the death of Pala, one irrefutable fact surfaces—somebody has succeeded in silencing him. As a media person, his murder is an effrontery meant to threaten and intimidate members of the media. We are vehemently outraged. Pala's right to speak out as a Filipino is inalienable. Freedom of the press must be upheld.

Hence, we condemn in the strongest term possible the killing of our colleague, Davao broadcaster Jun Pala, whose murder clearly stresses the continuing assault on the Philippine press, in particular and press freedom, in general.

The officers and members of the FPPCP and PELP from all over the Philippines support any concerted move to rally action and call attention to the unsolved murders of journalists in the country. The FPPCP and the PELP are calling on their brothers in media to take a united stand that will pressure the authorities to make decisive steps in implementing security measures designed to protect all practicing mediamen, particularly in the provincial media. The FPPCP and PELP echo the sentiments of alarmed media colleagues who are not hesitant to speak out against this "wanton disregard for mediamen's lives."

The least that the media need from the authorities now is tokenism and expressions of sympathy lacking any concrete steps to really protect them and respect their profession.

Without justice, the atrocities against Filipino journalists will continue unabated. The cry for justice rises from the grave of our fallen colleagues. Their cries must be heeded by all.

—BERNIE GANGE MIAQUE,
national president,
Federation of Provincial Press
Clubs of the Philippines/
Publishers and Editors League
of the Philippines,
Suite 609, GTP2, Pioneer
Highlands, Pioneer cor. Madison
Streets, Mandaluyong City

LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

More vigilance urged on 'chinovelas'

I HAVE watched the popular Taiwanese TV soap, locally called *chinovela*, "Meteor Garden" and I was dismayed to discover that the lead heroes of the series are bullies, not the best role models for young viewers. The F4 members are characters who push people around. Their dialogue was at times downright insulting. One lead character addressing an elderly woman, called her "*Pakialamerang matanda*" and one homely lady, "*Babaeng unggoy*." What colorful language, so to speak!

It is doubly alarming to read that no less than the Movie Television Review and Classification Board chair herself has said that there is no harm in *chinovelas*, and that we can even "learn new things from the said soap operas, and should not reject them," when these Taiwanese series have been banned in China. How interesting it is that China's Administration of Radio, Film and Television found these soap operas questionable, while their counterparts in our country found them fascinating. These *chinovelas* are teen soap operas. We know how pliant adolescents are. Teenage viewers will see the F4 as kindred spirits and thus pattern their lives on these stubborn characters, who are sadly lacking in good manners and sensitivity.

Objections should be raised not only against the *chinovelas* but, to the *telenovelas* as well. With so many Filipinos hooked to *telenovelas* and *chinovelas* at all hours of the day, parents should be wary about the negative values upheld by these popular soap operas. Look at how these series shape the view of the youth. They push forth the myth that power, wealth and pleasure are the ultimate good. The way sex and violence are depicted is distressing. The characters are mostly bent on vindictiveness and the anti-heroes are drug lords [generals or police officers] and corrupt government officials. Even doctors are portrayed as evil doers. The emphasis it seems is on the system of high-level corruption, degradation of social values and the breakdown of families.

With the MTRCB seemingly sleeping on the job, we, parents should be more vigilant.

—LEAH P. MOLINA,
Daughters of Mary Immaculate,
Our Lady of Rose Circle,
Sts. Peter and Paul Parish,
Poblacion, Makati City

Let Iggy prove he is Jose Pidal

ALLOW me to react to retired Justice Isagani Cruz's column. (PDI, 9/13/03) Let me emphasize one point. It was Ignacio Arroyo himself who volunteered the information that he was and is Jose Pidal. When he made this unilateral admission, absent any compelling process, the mantle of defense emanating from the constitutional right to be left alone was effectively dropped and waived.

Having gone out of that constitutional sanctuary, to plead the defense as if he were still there has no more ground and reason. To hold otherwise is to allow feigned ignorance triumph over the better of our valor and moral rectitude.

By all means, the Senate should compel him to shed light on the darkness he claims he is.

—HENRY T. ESTAMPADOR,
94 Plaza Rizal,
Jaro, Iloilo City

Consumer audit team for power rate charges

I THINK there's something misleading about Meralco's recent TV advertisement, where we see some very "happy" citizens thanking it for the few pesos it gave away during the first phase of its refund in June. They are presented as testimonies that indeed, the refund was a big help for the expenditures of ordinary Juan and Juana.

While it is true that the refund is a big help, the public should not be "thanking" Meralco for that. Why? Because we are just getting our money back. Newspaper reports revealed that the refund is being given in compliance with a Supreme Court ruling on the utility firm's overpricing of electricity rates. Why should we thank Meralco for giving back what is due us in the first place? We are entitled to that. We have every right to take back what has been unjustly taken from us. Very much like the Marcos loot.

I would also like to comment about Meralco's advertisement in major dailies last Sept. 9, announcing that the second phase of the refund would start this month as "part of its continuing service to the public." May I point out that the advertisement is misleading. The refund is not a service but in compliance with the ruling of the high court. Meralco keeps on making it sound like it is doing something good for the so-called "service to the public" when for the longest time it has been charging us with excessive rates. Now, where's the "*lubusang paglilingkod*" in that?

The former Energy Regulatory Board set a condition on its grant of provisional authority for Meralco to increase its rates: If found to have overcharged consumers, Meralco should return the excess charges. It was found to have indeed overcharged, but it did not comply with the ERB condition until it was forced to by the Supreme Court order. So you see, it must take a ruling from the highest court of the land to make it comply. Just imagine if the case wasn't taken to the high court. We will continue to be burdened with unjust rates.

Which makes me want to review my monthly electric bills. Just think about this—if there's already a lowering of the rates in the form of the so-called refund, why do the electricity rates keep on skyrocketing? Is it possible that Meralco is charging us its other expenses? Is it possible that it is charging us the TV and print advertisement costs it recently disbursed? I hope not. I believe those costs should be part of its penalty for overpricing us consumers. Meralco should not pass those charges to us.

In line with this, I want to suggest that a consumer audit team be created by the Energy Regulatory Commission to protect consumers. This audit team will surely take care of the scrutinizing for us.

—NAME WITHHELD
UPON REQUEST

Senate not blamed for Oakwood mutiny

THIS has reference to the news report last Sept. 15, 2003 quoting the Army commanding general, Lt. Gen. Gregorio M. Camiling Jr., that the "Senate is partly to be blamed for the foiled mutiny last July 27 in Oakwood, Makati City since most of the proposed bills addressing the issues and concerns of the Armed Forces of the Philippines are still pending."

Camiling clarified that he never issued such a statement during his visit to the Philippine Military Academy last Sept. 13. What he told Baguio journalists was that the AFP has taken measures in the past to uplift the lives of the Filipino soldiers by proposing bills to this effect to the legislature. Through Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and other legislators, the AFP has taken up various proposals to address the soldiers' concerns regarding salaries and housing. Our lawmakers have acted favorably on the proposed measures, notably the increase in soldiers' pay through Republic Act 9166—An Act Increasing the Rate of Base Pay and Other Benefits of AFP Officers and Enlisted Personnel—which the President signed into law on June 7, 2002.

The Army chief asserted that the AFP and its soldiers are aware of the long and exhaustive process behind the ratification of a bill. Similarly, the Army chief said that he made clear to the troops that the proposed bills require funding, thus will be taken up according to priority. Seeing this, our soldiers recognize that this is beyond the control of the AFP, Camiling stressed.

Camiling clarified that when he said, "*Matagal na ang mga* [proposed bills] *'yan*," he actually meant that the AFP has taken cognizance of the soldiers' sentiments and has taken proactive measures to bring these issues to the proper fora long before the Oakwood incident. Camiling expressed strong belief that even without the mutiny, the pending bills will still be approved by the Senate and House. The passing of RA 9166 into law only shows that the AFP and Congress are looking after the welfare of our soldiers, the full implementation of which will be effective next year.

Consequently, Camiling elaborated that any bill enacted, which benefited the AFP, was the result of the advocacy by our legislators to strengthen the AFP's structure, foundation and morale of soldiers. Similarly, Camiling cited that the Philippine Army under his leadership and the AFP, will continually collaborate with our lawmakers to come up with comprehensive laws that would uplift the soldiers' morale and well-being.

—LT. COL. JOSELITO E. KAKILALA,
Army chief public affairs,
Fort Andres Bonifacio, Makati City

Get smart!

IF the title brings back memories, then your age is showing. For younger readers who may have missed that very popular American sitcom, dating back to the 1960s, let me explain what the series was all about. (My information on the series comes from the Internet... okay, okay, so I did get to watch some of the later episodes, and was very, very young then.)

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

"Get Smart" was a spoof on the James Bond craze. In the series, two spy agencies were pitted against each other, one called KONTROL and the other KAOS, the letters not standing for anything in particular. The good guys were from KONTROL, with Agent 86 as the lead character. Agent 86's "real" name was Maxwell Smart, the name itself being a spoof because this secret agent wasn't very smart, bungling from one episode to another and yet managing to overcome his enemies, mainly out of sheer luck.

The TV series was so popular that it spinned off two movies. One of them, "The Nude Bomb," has been showing on HBO and I was able to catch about half an hour of the film. (These days there are limits to the inanities one can take, what with our politicians' real-life horrendous gaffes.)

Watching Agent Smart, I kept getting a sense of déjà vu, and certainly not about the 1960s (remember, I was very, very...). It was the look on Agent Smart's face that seemed so familiar. After a few minutes it all fell together: I realized it was the same look you find on George Bush's face whenever he gives his speeches.

Let me try to describe that look. It's an almost arrogant smugness that comes with an attempt to look smart. Of course, the eyes always give away the fact that they (Bush and Smart) don't know what they're talking about. It's the look of gullibility: Agent Smart keeps getting into trouble because he believes everything people say.

At the same time, it's an attempt to look unfazed even after getting into trouble, still trying to outsmart the enemy. Get Smart was subtitled "Would You Believe?" because each episode was marked by Agent 86 falling into the hands of the enemy and trying to work his way out. For example, he would claim that his associates were on the way to rescue him and would arrive in five minutes. The enemy agents would stare back, totally unconvinced, and Smart would go, "Would you believe, eight minutes?" and then go on to "bargain" with 10 minutes, 12 minutes.

It's corny humor, and yet when you think about it, Bush has been pulling the same trick on US citizens, and on the world. Bush argued the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was working directly with al-Qaida, a claim that was vital toward convincing Americans, still mourning the 9/11 attacks, that Iraq had to be invaded, as an act of retribution.

For world consumption, Bush had an accomplice, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who I'm tempted to say, has the Austin Powers look but no, it's a far cry. Anyway, with Bush citing British intelligence and Blair citing US intelligence, we were treated to an amazing melange of claims of Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction" (WMD), one feeding into another. In October last year, Bush claimed Iraq was "six months away" from developing a nuclear weapon. A few months later, Blair was claiming Iraq could launch a WMD attack "within 45 minutes."

It turns out that these claims were just as about as credible as Agent Maxwell Smart's threats to KAOS agents. Just last week, Bush admitted, "We've had no evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved in Sept. 11"—only a few days after his own vice president had said such a link exists.

That admission is only the latest in the unraveling of the Bush administration's justifications for an invasion of Iraq. A few weeks back, there was furor in the United States as the mass media pinned Bush down on a claim he made in a January speech that the "British government had learned that Saddam Hussein recently bought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." It turned out that this claim was based on forged documents and that no less than the former US ambassador to Niger, the African country referred to, did tell US government officials, a long time back, that the story was not true. Despite the ambassador's report, Bush used that fabricated claim in his State of the Union Address, the equivalent of our State of the Nation Address.

As for the WMD, it's become tedious listening to the the latest news reports of new "evidence." Last May for example, following the discovery of two trailers in Iraq, Bush boasted: "We found the weapons of mass destruction. We found biological laboratories... They're illegal. They're against the UN resolutions, and we've so far discovered two. And we'll find more weapons as time goes by. But for those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong. We found them."

It turned out that the trailers weren't for producing WMD, another one of many false leads. Imagine Bush's voice droning on and on about the biological labs and banned weapons and you can picture him with that Smart look, complete with the "Would you believe?" lines. I'm being kind here, comparing Bush to Smart, because we can still give him the benefit of the doubt, that perhaps he's just gullible, easily duped by the warmongering advisers around him.

By and large, the world has been smarter than Smart Bush. If you go back and check the news files, you'll find that many countries' leaders and their citizens were always cynical about Bush and Blair's claims. There were even massive anti-war protests even before the invasion.

In contrast, our own President and her subalterns provided the few voices of support for Bush and Blair, all too eager to send Filipino troops to Iraq as cannon fodder, and shamelessly asking if Filipinos could be given preference for jobs to reconstruct Iraq after it had been bombed out.

In a few days, Bush will come to visit, to thank the President and the Philippines for being part of his Coalition of the Willing. It's time we speak up. It's time we get smart.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

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4 slain youths tortured, police say

DAVAO CITY—The four youths abducted by alleged soldiers assigned with the military's intelligence group had obviously pleaded for their lives and died in pain, police authorities in Maco, Compostela Valley said.

A police investigator in Maco said the mouths of Lito Doydoy, Anak Bayan community organizer; Marjorie Reynoso, Anak Bayan coordinator; Jonathan Benaro, a youth councilor; and Ramon Regase, a motorcycle driver, were gagged with masking tape.

"They (must) have shouted in pain and pleaded for their lives but no one could hear them," the investigator said.

The investigator, who requested anonymity, said the victims' ordeal under the hands of their tormentors could be easily gleaned from the marks left on their bodies. The cadavers had rope imprints on the neck and bore stab wounds.

The same police officer said it is possible the victims were strangled to death before the suspects buried them in the middle of the Selecta Banana Farm in Barangay Quarry in Maco.

The cadavers were discovered after a plantation worker smelled a foul odor near his work area on Tuesday.

The plantation worker, identified only as Tata, had suspected something irregular about the odor and immediately informed the police.

Maco policemen dug the source of the stink and found the cadavers of at least four people.

The cadavers were already decomposing, prompting police to conclude the victims were killed days before they were found.

Their families positively identified the victims.

Doydoy, Reynoso, Benaro, and Regase were abducted on Saturday afternoon while on their way to Maco poblacion.

Ariel Casilao, Karapatan secretary general, reported that the four had attended a birthday party in Tagum City when armed men, on board a red and white Tamaraw FX vehicle, blocked their way near the Hijo Banana Plantation.

The suspects, allegedly led by a Willy Javier, an asset of the Military Intelligence Group (MIG), allegedly forced them into the Tamaraw FX.

Casilao cited accounts of witnesses who said two of the male victims were shot in the leg after they refused to go with the suspects.

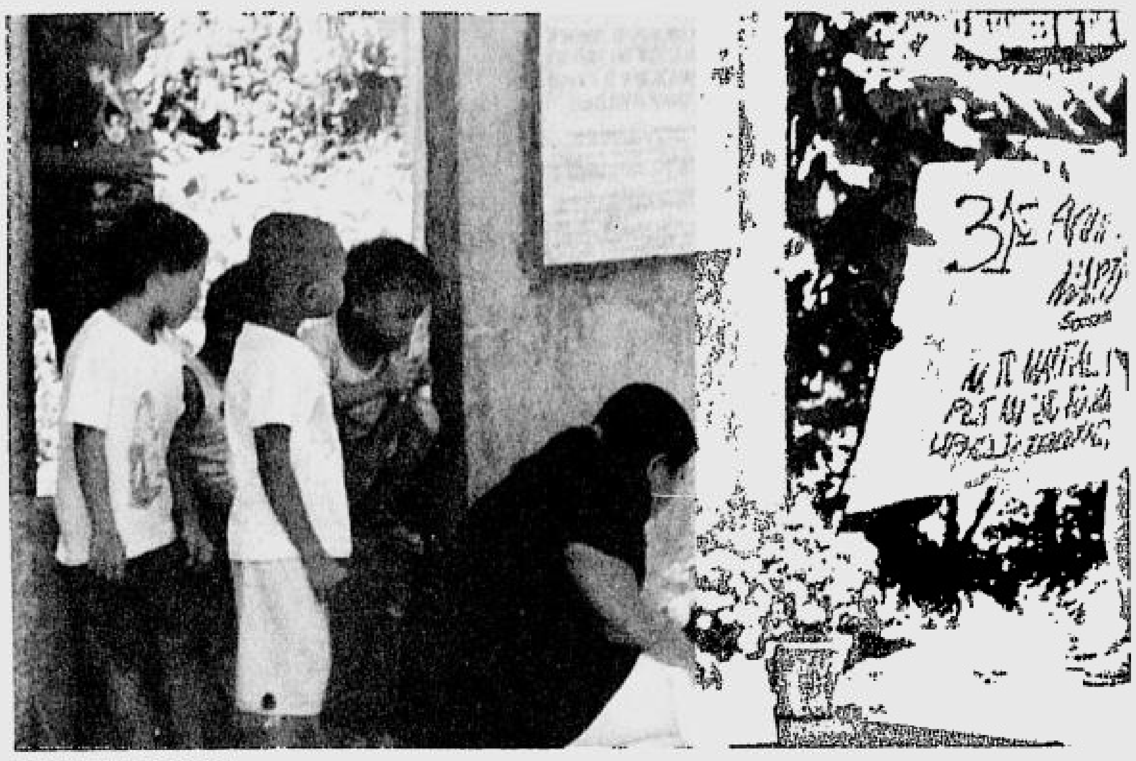
He said the suspicion that the MIG was behind the abduction and deaths of the four victims was boosted by the identification of Javier.

But Lt. Col. Agane Adriatico, chief of the military's 5th Civil Relations Group for Southeastern Mindanao, denied the role of MIG elements in the incident, saying there was no reason for them to do such thing.

Adriatico said he has already talked with MIG commander, Maj. Allen Capuyan, who downplayed Karapatan's allegations as an effort to discredit the military.

Compostela Valley Gov. Jose Caballero vowed justice for the victims, saying he already tasked the police to conduct a deeper probe.

Adriatico said militant groups might have used the victims as 'sacrificial lambs' "to discredit the Armed Forces of the Philippines." *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



REMEMBERING

RYAN ROSAURO/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

A relative of a victim of human rights abuses during Martial Law offers candles beneath a memorial market for the victims in Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte.

Mindanao Fund takes center stage at IMF, World Bank meet in Dubai

DAVAO CITY—The Mindanao Fund takes center stage in the Annual Governor's Meeting of the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Dubai this week.

The Mindanao Fund, whose amount is not yet known, is a package that will finance peace and development projects on the island.

According to the Office of Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza, the proposed fund was initially discussed Tuesday in the WB-IMF meeting in Dubai, which is the first Middle East site of the WB-IMF meetings.

In a press statement from Dubai, Dureza said the proposed fund may also include possible financing of "peace dividends" if a final peace agreement is signed between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Dureza joined the delegation of Philippine officials headed by Finance Secretary Isidro Camacho and Central Bank Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

The Philippine delegation is hoping to obtain support from donor agencies.

Dureza, who is also chair of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), said discussions on possible Mindanao Fund to develop Southern Philippines are expected to be held as side meetings.

Robert Vance Pulley, Philippine country director of the World Bank, will reportedly participate in the discussions together with Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong.

The office of the President in Mindanao said Camacho, Amatong and Dureza already held meetings with the officials of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) Fund and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) over the weekend at the Dubai Convention Center, site of the WB-IMF gathering.

The Philippine delegation is also expected to meet with World Bank President James Wolfensohn. *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

FIND OUT!
In one minute
IF YOUR HEARING IS NORMAL

Do you sometimes have to turn up the volume of the TV to hear it clearly?

Do you sometimes have difficulty understanding conversation within a group?

Do you sometimes have difficulty hearing women's or children's voice?

If your answer is "yes" to any of the above, you may be one of the 7 million (estimated) in the Philippines with a hearing loss. Recognizing a hearing loss and taking positive action to improve the situation are often the most important steps you can take to improve the quality of your life. If you think that you or a family member may have a hearing loss, visit Sountex™ today and we will be happy to answer all your questions about hearing loss. Using advance computerized diagnostic test equipment, we can measure precisely any level of hearing loss, and advise you on the most suitable course of action. Call us today for a FREE "no obligation" hearing test.

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ROUNDUP

Trader shot dead

CALBAYOG CITY—A local businessman was gunned down by a still unidentified assassin on Thursday near the vicinity of Tiburcio Tancinco Memorial Institute of Science and Technology (TTMIST) in this city. Romeo Jimenez, 48, was on his way home at around 7 p.m. after his usual afternoon lawn tennis game at the TTMIST when the gunman, using a .45 cal. pistol, shot him in the head. The victim died on the spot. The gunman fled with a motorcycle driven by another suspect. Insp. Lope Lim of the Calbayog police said they were considering business rivalry as the motive for the murder.

Noel Labendia, PDI Visayas Bureau

Bohol: Proud of tarsier

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Bohol provincial board has passed a resolution expressing appreciation to the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) for choosing the tarsier as the official mascot of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games (SEAG) scheduled in Manila. Board member Tomas Abapo Jr., the resolution's sponsor, said POC's choice of the tarsier as official mascot is a source of pride because it is already a fact that when you mention tarsier you think of Bohol. The Philippine tarsier has found shelter in secondary growth forests in Bohol and has chosen the place as its natural home purportedly for 45 million years already. The provincial government has adopted the Philippine tarsier as its official tourism mascot.

Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Typhoid cases up

ILOILO CITY—The Department of Health epidemiology center in Western Visayas has reported that typhoid cases in the region has reached 754 in August, including two fatalities—one in March and another in May. The figure was 64 percent more than the 459 cases reported over the same period last year. Iloilo had the most cases with 598 followed by Negros Occidental (116), Guimaras (22), Capiz (12), Antique (4) and Aklan (2). Nearly a third of the patients were children below 10 years old. Dr. Jessie Glen Alonsabe, DOH regional epidemiologist, attributed the increase in the number of cases to the scarcity of water in the early part of the year due to El Niño and the rainy weather in recent months. The DOH urged local governments to strictly enforce sanitation regulations governing eateries and food vendors. *Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

School head suspended

BACOLOD CITY—The Ombudsman in the Visayas has ordered the three-month suspension without pay of the principal of the Rafael B. Lacson Memorial High School in Talisay City, Negros Occidental for renting out togas to graduating students despite an earlier warning that she or her husband could not conduct business with students. Aida Judith was suspended last week based on a complaint filed by disgruntled parents. The Ombudsman-Visayas had previously admonished Judith when her husband sold jogging pants to students. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Tawi-tawi village no longer isolated

A SMALL island village in Tawi-tawi is now a phone call away.

After a long wait, the fishing community of Barangay Pababag of about 1,000 households now enjoy access to telecommunications services with the opening of a satellite public calling office.

The calling office, opened by telecommunications firm Smart Communications Inc. (Smart), was made possible with the help of the USAID-funded Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy (Amore) program which provided electricity to the village through solar power systems.

Pababag, despite being near to the capital Bongao and the Malaysian territory Sabah, did not have electricity for years because of its distance from the national power grid.

After power was brought to the village, Amore teamed up with Smart to provide Barangay Pababag with a calling office, which now runs through Amore-installed solar power systems.

"The public calling office signalled the barangay's access to telecommunications using renewable energy—a milestone in the development initiatives of Mindanao," a Smart statement quoted Rodrigo Cabrera, Amore official, as saying.

Running on batteries charged through solar panels, the calling office contains a plug-and-play unit consisting of a main terminal that has phone functions and a SIM, an all-weather resistant dome antenna and cable and a telephone set.

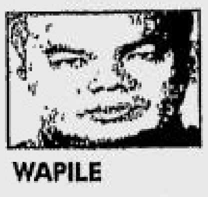
Calls can be made to anywhere within a 13-million square mile area that stretches from Pakistan to Papua New Guinea.

The Smart statement also quoted Enrique Gallardo, Amore livelihood specialist, as saying the villagers' response to the calling office was overwhelming.

"*Madami na agad gumamit ng telepono* the moment it was installed," Gallardo was quoted as saying.

He said villagers use the phone to call relatives who are in Malaysia or are in other places in Mindanao. "Others use it to contact their buyers of fish and mats," he said.

Countdown for Justice



WAPILE

IT is exactly 500 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Mangyan folk protest bad TV portrayal

By Madonna T. Virola
San Jose, Occidental Mindoro

A GROUP of Mangyan tribes in Occidental Mindoro refused at first to be interviewed for fear of being inaccurately portrayed again by the media.

The Samahang Habanan Buhid cited an episode of a popular television program, "Magandang Gabi Bayan (MGB)," aired last year on ABS-CBN, which showed that the tribe buries its children alive.

For that, the 12-year-old organization of Buhid Mangyan residents in San Jose and Rizal towns, sent a handwritten letter in Filipino dated Sept. 4, 2002 to the TV program, expressing its protest to what it called a bad portrayal of its culture.

Fifty-five officers and members signed the letter, some of them writing in Mangyan. Until now, they feel bad because they have not received any response from the MGB.

Recently, one of the members said, people from another TV station and a national daily arrived in their village and took video shots of them without asking for their consent. Neither did they explain the purpose of the unexpected visit.

MGB side

MGB executive producer Myla Valentin said they had not received a letter from the Mangyan group.

After the INQUIRER faxed to her the letter, she talked with her researcher, Tina Sadural, and writer, Hazel Pahanustaz, and faxed back a response.

The MGB said the story of the tribal practice of burying children alive was based on interviews of Mangyan people themselves.

It identified one of the interviewees as Ricardo Peñaflor, of Barangay Batasan, San Jose, who has an adopted two-year-old child named Rica May. The child's biological parents are Mangyan.

"He disclosed that two years ago, a pregnant Mangyan who had just visited their barangay gave birth near his house. When the Mangyan found out that her child was a girl, she said she would bury it but Ricardo instead told the Mangyan that he would adopt her baby," the MGB statement said.

Other families that the MGB segment producers interviewed shared their stories of how they saved Mangyan children from being buried by their parents and adopted them, the statement said.

"Batas Mayo, leader of Tribu Buhid in Sitio Banban, admitted on cam that it is their tradition and there are many reasons why a Mangyan bury [sic] their babies," it added.

Again, it cited the story of Atong Ihop of Tribu Hanunuo who found a half-buried baby in the forest. He adopted the baby, who is now 5 years old.

"There are other interviews that said they dug up a baby in the forest," said the MGB.

Phobia

At first, the Buhid Mangyan refused to be interviewed by this writer, who went to their community in Sitio Bato Ili, Barangay Monteclaro in San Jose.

They knew that those who had been interviewed by the MGB like Batas Mayo were few and live in isolated areas. In putting the story together, the important parts were not integrated, they said.

More so, they said, it would take proper coordination and living among them to understand fully their culture.

After discussing among themselves and agreeing that the article could correct the negative perception about them, especially the impression that they don't respect the rights of the children, they yielded.

Danilo Barrientos, 30, a Hanunuo Mangyan married to a Buhid Mangyan, said their elderly were also very cautious in telling the young generation about the sacred aspects of their culture for fear that they might be mishandled.

The Mangyan tradition is handed down orally.

The MGB took the Buhid Mangyan culture out of context, according to Fr. Rod Salazar, an anthropology student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, who has been working with the tribespeople through the 18-year-old Mangyan Mission in Occidental Mindoro.

"There are aspects in the Buhid Mangyan culture that are very sacred to them that they won't just tell you," he added.

Samay Lagus, in her 60s, speaking in Buhid Mangyan, related a story handed down by their ancestors to better understand the culture.

During the early times, the elders did not die but just changed their skin and became young again.

OFFICERS and members of the Samahang Habanan Buhid ng Occidental Mindoro are appealing to media practitioners to seek their consent first before conducting any coverage about their community. MADONNA VIROLA

One time, an old woman told her grandson that she would sleep for a while for her skin transformation. She told her grandson not to cry so as not to catch the attention of the *labang* (evil spirit) who ate old persons. When the old woman had been sleeping for a long time, he tried to wake her up by shaking her body, but she would not awaken. The grandson cried aloud and as they expected, the *labang* came and ate the old woman.

The story explains why there is no noisy mourning and weeping among the Buhid Mangyan. They fear the *labang* who will take their dead. Thus, when a child is sure to die, it is preferred that he or she be buried to be spared of the worst act of the evil one.

War experience

The Buhid Mangyan also cited their experiences during the war to clarify what is now believed by many non-Mangyan as a heartless practice of burying their children alive.

During World War I, the Mangyan acquired a phobia from war stories, which is why they don't make fire. They even prevent the crowing of the rooster. That's why, even just smelling a burning cigarette or seeing marks of slippers would already send them running.

So, a child who they thought was surely dying, would be buried so that the cries wouldn't be heard.

Kapitan Saay Reyes (called *guranon* by the Buhid Mangyan) added that there were cases when children experienced convulsions, high fever and loss of consciousness.

Some Buhid Mangyan, who believe that the child was dead, would bury him, and would be surprised if later, the child would show signs of life.

One time, a *siganon* (Tagalog) was able to rescue a child. This very rare event could have been circulated outside the real circumstances.

"The tribesmen don't probably inspect the dead because they have a strong belief in the evil spirit," said Barrientos. In fact, they would not leave a child alone in the house for fear of being taken by the *labang*.

The child would be put on a handwoven sling and carried to the *kaingin* (swidden farm).

Another Buhid Mangyan said epidemics had forced them to bury some children for fear of being infected by the diseases.

Kapitan Reyes could not recall of an event during his lifetime [he was about 5 years old when World War II broke out] when a child had been buried alive.

"Those who just bury the child are penalized because the Mangyan has a belief that it is a mortal sin to Afufun (God)," said Barrientos.

"Even we are looked upon as a lowly native, we have dignity as human beings and as part of the Philippines," he added.

The Buhid Mangyan members requested that their strong objection on being used by the media be written in Filipino so they would know whether this time, they are understood correctly.

Irresponsible

Fr. Edwin Gariguez, a founder of the church-based media office in Oriental Mindoro, said of the MGB story: "It's a form of irresponsible sensationalism at the expense of the Mangyan."

The advocacy officer of the Mangyan Mission in Oriental Mindoro added that after the episode was shown, some people who knew that he was working with the Mangyan, came to ask him why the Mangyan people were like that.

"The impression created was that, all Mangyans are like that [bury their child]. People had that bad image on the Mangyan. *Bakit daw ang Mangyan, pumapatay ng anak*! Generalized *na, di pa* established *ang* context."

He, however, added that the program has helped them with the antimining campaign.

Those who wish to coordinate with the Buhid Mangyan can go through the Vicarial Indigenous People Apostolate and Coordinating Office (Vipaco) in 0876 Mabini St., San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.

Tourism fever grips Los Baños with Bañamos festival

By Marlon Ramos
Los Baños, Laguna

WHEN lawyer Aries Castro read a brief news item about the ongoing Bañamos Festival in Los Baños, Laguna, in the INQUIRER early Saturday morning, he hurriedly packed up and invited some friends for a short trip to the scenic town.

He said it was better to spend his time in Los Baños, 60 km south of Manila, than have another dreary weekend in his rented condominium unit in Makati City.

At 9 a.m., Castro and his three male companions were already traversing the Southern Luzon Expressway.

"I was really thrilled with the thought of going to Los Baños again. It's been five years since I visited the town of my beloved alma mater," Castro said, referring to the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) where he graduated with a degree in Sociology in 1990.

The group braved the intermittent rains and heat of the sun, and arrived at its destination an hour later.

"Going here is very special for me. It's really nice (that) the current local officials came up with this festival. The whole world should know how beautiful this town is," Castro exclaimed.

Australian environmentalist Brad Sisley said a friend invited him to visit the town but didn't know a festival was being held.

"What my friend told me about Los Baños is Mt. Makiling. [But] we were surprised to see cheerful dancers in the streets so we decided to stop by and have a look," he said.

What he enjoyed most, he said, was the warm reception of the people who greeted every passersby with "Happy Bañamos."

PARTICIPANTS to the Bath Festival in Los Baños, Laguna show their skills in the street dancing competition. MARLON RAMOS

"They really make you feel that you're welcome here. It's nice. It's very Filipino," Sisley said.

Founding day

The five-day festivity, which started on Sept. 17, the town's 388th founding anniversary, was the first of its kind for the town, said Municipal Tourism Council (MTC) chair Francis Peñalba.

He said the festival was the brainchild of Mayor Caesar Perez, who earlier sought help from them shortly after winning the 2001 elections.

"He [Perez] said he wanted to start a grand festival which will showcase not only the products, but more importantly, the tradition and culture of our town. We thought it was a great project so we agreed to help him," Peñalba said.

They immediately met with the different sectors in the town, including the Los Baños Science Community, an association of several academic institutions operating in the area. The response was very encouraging, he added.

"Staging a festival amid typhoons, economic uncertainties and challenges to national security may have seemed to be difficult and untimely, but our townmates have proved to be committed and unwavering in spirit and devotion," Peñalba said.

Perez, a Los Baños native, said the previous administrations lacked programs that would promote tourism and boost investments in the town.

"We know our town is well-known because of Mt. Makiling and the UPLB. But we have so much more to offer. It's a pity if we could not benefit from them," the mayor said.

He noted that 64 percent of the town area was used as part of the military reservation of Camp Eldridge and several government institutions, and was therefore not generating revenues for the town.

"We have to resort to other ways of adding to our little income from taxes. So there's no other way but to promote our tourism. We know tourism equates to business opportunities," Perez said.

MTC member Robby Cereno said they thought of highlighting the hot springs as the primary "come-on" for the celebration.

He said they had to review their etymology to come up with an interesting name for the festival. "We decided to work with the word *bañar*, a Spanish word for 'bath,' which is also the root word of our town's name. *Bañamos* literally means 'Let's take a bath.' It's like inviting the people to shower themselves with nature's gift," Cereno said.

The town's name, he explained, literally means "bathing place."

Celebration

The festival kicked off with a parade from the national road to the town proper. It was attended by some 5,000 people representing different sectors of the community.

In keeping with the theme, "Shower ourselves with science and nature's gift," several people lined up the streets and sprayed water on the participants.

The scene was similar to the famous Feast of St. John the Baptist in San Juan, Metro Manila, where people soak each other.

"But we ensured that the water (that) the people would use was clean. We don't want people to hurt others. They are supposed to enjoy and have fun during the celebration," Perez said.

The MTC also scheduled tours and put up exhibits in the different academic institutions in town. A trade fair showcased local products.

On Saturday, Castro joined more than 15,000 people at the municipal covered court and the municipal park for the "main events"—the Buko Pie Festival and the Bayle sa Kalye.

Young and old contestants engaged in the *buko* pie eating Contest. Residents and guests also joined the Palarong Pinoy featuring native games like the carabao race and *baboy sebo* (pig-chasing contest).

Culture

Under the heat of the sun, 26 groups garbed in colorful costumes caused "hysteria" among the spectators who patiently waited for the "Bayle sa Kalye" street dancing.

With at least 15 members each, the groups electrified the crowd with interpretations of a song inspired by Latin singer Ricky Martin's hit, "Uno, Dos, Tres."

Perez said they chose the Latin music as a fitting tribute to their Spanish-influenced culture. He said he really wanted to initiate a program to retrace the town's culture and tradition.

Ten-year-old Mary Jane Herrera, dressed in a colorful butterfly costume, said their group trained hard for two months for the contest.

"We want to make people remember us as the most creative and graceful dancers of the contest," she said.

The Palaboys, a group of out-of-school youths, won convincingly with their *taong-grasa* costume.

On the last day of the event, nine teams with three members each competed for the Makiling Mountain Quest, a seven-event adventure race.

The endurance contest, which attracted participants from as far as Baguio City, challenged the groups in hiking, biking, running, river trailing, treasure hunting, rappelling and team games.

Cereno promised a bigger event next year, adding that they were overwhelmed by the success of this year's festival.

FOUR DIGIT
4 5 5 1
(In exact order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45
4 23 33 37 41 43

SUERTRES
9 4 3

METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Car accident? Traffic jam? Use this chalk

By Margaux Ortiz

DON'T be surprised to see chalk lines on the street. Nobody died. It will probably be the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) investigating a vehicular accident.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said in a radio interview over the weekend that they would start using chalks to prevent traffic from building up during accidents.

The traffic chief said MMDA traffic enforcers, who are all equipped with the chalk, are instructed to trace the outline of vehicles involved in accidents.

Vergel de Dios said that this way, it would take less time to remove the vehicles from the roads and enable traffic to flow freely.

"This is not the kind of chalk used on blackboards," he clarified.

He explained that the MMDA's special chalk is the kind used to mark lumber and does not fade easily.

Vergel de Dios said their new project was part of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando's 15-minute traffic program.

The program requires traffic enforcers to clear the roads of stalled vehicles within 15 minutes, Vergel de Dios said.

The MMDA official said they were also proud of their newly acquired "arsenal equipment": 64 new motorcycles powered by 250-cc engines.

"With the new motorcycles, our enforcers can go after speeding violators," he added.

FACE-OFF
A policeman blocks a protester wearing a mask featuring President Macapagal-Arroyo during a demonstration in Manila Wednesday staged by militant groups hours before Ms Macapagal left for a trip to the United States and Europe. AFP

Warehouse firms set watch on shipments

By Leila B. Salaverria

STUNG by the possibility that international drug traffickers are using their facilities in developing the local shabu industry, members of an association of freight station operators are promising to block shipments that can be used in the illegal drugs trade.

Tyrone Regaliza, vice president of the Association of Off-Dock Container Freight Stations (ACOF), disclosed this to the INQUIRER yesterday.

Regaliza is also general manager of the Pac Atlantic Shipping Lines, which owns the warehouse in Paco, Manila, that yielded eight tons of suspected shabu-making chemicals and equipment in a police raid last Saturday.

According to him, ACOF member companies have decided to closely inspect cargo that pass through their warehouses and watch out for shipment that could be intended for local illegal drugs manufacturers.

Suspicious cargo would then be reported to authorities.

"We are doing this for us not to be used (by dubious characters)," Regaliza said in a phone interview.

To help them detect contraband, the ACOF official said they had invited Sr. Supt. Rolando Mabutas of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) to orient them on ways to determine drug-related shipments.

Regaliza said off-dock freight stations like Pac Atlantic Shipping Lines had no control over the kind of shipment they receive for storage.

"We can't stop individuals or companies from buying what they want and we can't prevent them from shipping these unless there's a quarantine," he said.

However, Regaliza added, station operators could already act once these had received a shipment.

An example would be Pac Atlantic's cooperation with the PDEA in last Saturday's raid.

Regaliza said that when the company discovered that two shipments it had received in April and May contained acetone, a chemical which is the key ingredient of shabu, they alerted the authorities.

DRIVE VS CRIME, GANGS

Metro, provincial cops strengthen ties

By Tina Santos

TOP POLICE officials in Metro Manila have strengthened ties with provincial cops in a bid to neutralize crime syndicates involved in bank robberies, kidnap-for-ransom and drug trafficking who maintain hideouts in the provinces.

"Close coordination with nearby areas in Metro Manila is necessary since after these criminals strike in the metropolis, they use as escape route and even hideouts nearby provinces, such as Cavite, Bulacan, Rizal and Laguna," said National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco.

He also cited the timely creation of Task Force Against Bank Robbery by the Philippine National Police.

Velasco said that in the recent meeting between top Metro and provincial police officials, they discussed inter-police office coordination toward the immediate identification of the safehouses being kept by criminal syndicates in the provinces.

"We need to establish a network to facilitate operations to track them down since these groups usually maintain safehouses outside Metro Manila where they lie low after perpetrating the heists or after making drug deals," Velasco explained.

He cited the case of Pentagon Gang leader Faisal Marohombsar, who hid out in Cavite after bolting from Camp Crame and was subsequently killed in a shootout with police operatives.

Based on reports gathered by the NCRPO, criminal syndicates active in Metro Manila usually keep lairs in Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal.

Frame-up case reaches Senate

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

THE CASE of Ricardo Romualdo, owner of a car repair shop in Quezon City who was allegedly framed up by antinarcotics cops, has reached the Senate.

The committee on public order and illegal drugs chaired by Sen. Robert Z. Barbers has summoned the policemen allegedly involved and their superiors to a hearing.

The Barbers committee will try to find loopholes in Rep. Act 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 that took effect in July this year.

* * *

Barbers is the author of Rep. Act 9165 which penalizes with death through lethal injection law enforcers who "plant" drugs on innocent citizens.

Romualdo's case will put to the test the Barbers Law in so far as the framing up of innocent citizens by cops is concerned.

As Barbers told this columnist: "Law enforcers who frame up innocent citizens should be meted out the highest penalty under RA 9165."

* * *

This columnist is helping Romualdo defend himself in court. The cops, who barged into his house without any warrant, dragged him out and shot him in the street, have filed a case of drug pushing against him in court.

Romualdo has undergone delicate operations for removal of the bullet lodged near his spine. He is in danger of becoming paralyzed.

The unmarried 34-year-old automotive electrician-mechanic is the sole breadwinner of a big family. His father, from whom he inherited the small shop, became paralyzed after a stroke years ago.

* * *

Neighbors we interviewed on "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" swear to Romualdo's innocence. They say he was too busy in his auto repair shop to think of doing something illegal.

They say the cops probably got the wrong address after they were tipped off that a "pot session" was going on inside Apartment unit 45 Aguho Street, Barangay Claro, Project 3. The apartment has seven doors with the same address: 45, 45-A, B, C, D, E and F.

Neighbors and barangay officials believe that the cops filed drug pushing charges against Romualdo as a leverage against a criminal case he would file against them.

* * *

One of the Bicol governors who reportedly bet millions of pesos in a cockfight derby at the Caceres Sports Arena in Naga City during the feast of Our Lady of Peñafrancia was not present.

Al Francis Bichara of Albay was not in that derby because he was in Manila, according to Maribeth, the governor's sister.

The INQUIRER correspondent in Bicol who wrote the story, from where my comments in this space Tuesday were based, has apologized to Bichara.

* * *

Former Sen. Dominique "Nikki" Coseteng wrote to react to the article about the "scandalous display of wealth" (the headline of the Sept. 23 column) where she was mentioned.

Ms Coseteng gave the following clarifications:

"I did not make a spectacle of myself by betting heavily in the cockfight at the Caceres Sports Arena last Sept. 18. I was not betting. I was invited to grace the derby during the Peñafrancia Festival.

"Money on the table in front of me was not mine. I just happened to be sitting elbow to elbow with many others in the first row which was in front of the ledge next to the ring.

"I did not have aides, *cristos* or *casadores*. I do not move around with aides. I was with a special friend from Manila who was probably mistaken for my aide. He isn't.

"'Guilt?' `Shame?' I feel absolutely no guilt or shame as my family and I have always lived simply with dignity and delicadeza and will continue to do so."

* * *

A mutual friend of the former senator and myself said that Ms Coseteng has been visiting cockpits throughout the country because she's running again for the Senate.

"There are 10 million cockfight aficionados, gamecock breeders and people dependent on a P14-billion industry," Ms Coseteng said in her letter to this columnist, "who share the love for the sport, considered a national pastime."

If Coseteng is able to go around all the cockpits in the archipelago, she'll be assured of at least 10 million votes.

Smart politician, this woman who's got a face that merits a second look.

* * *

Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez is finished as a politician. His career in show business is also finished.

True or not, his estranged live-in partner Kris Aquino's allegations that he beat her up and poked a gun at her are given credence by Aquino's fans. Kris' fans are in the millions.

There's a saying among Filipino macho males: "*Ang babae'y minamahal, hindi sinasaktan* (A woman is loved, not physically hurt)."

* * *

Marquez can learn a thing or two in treating a woman from First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Arroyo lets GMA's temper cool down before he explains his side. He never shouts back when he's shouted at by the President.

I had dinner with Mike Arroyo at a Thai restaurant in Makati recently. In the middle of the dinner, he received a call on his cellular phone.

He talked in Spanish with the person at the other end of the line. It was the President, as their language of communication is on Spanish.

After the conversation, the First Gentleman said he had to be excused because the President wanted him home early.

"*Pahamak na Ping Lacson yan. Maaga na akong pinauuwi dahil sa kanya* (That Ping Lacson has spoiled everything. I am now required to go home early because of him)," he said.

Metro can survive without Tarlac—BF

METRO Manila does not need the Capas landfill in Tarlac, Bayani Fernando, chair of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), said yesterday.

In fact, according to Fernando, the MMDA was not seeking the use the Capas landfill, which is being operated by the Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. (MCWMC).

Speaking before a joint assembly of five Baguio Rotary Club chapters, the MMDA chair said it was the MCWMC that offered the facility to the government.

Fernando made the statement to ease the minds of Tarlac residents who are protesting moves to dump Metro Manila trash in their province.

The Central Luzon Regional Development Council is also objecting to the MCWMC offer to accommodate some 1,500 tons of Metro Manila's garbage.

The metropolis generates some 8,000 tons of garbage daily.

Metro Clark Waste Management Corporation's 100-hectare landfill in Barangay Cut-Cut II in Tarlac City gets only 100 tons of garbage a day from locators inside the Clark Special Economic Zone and some Tarlac towns.

"I haven't even received any formal proposal yet from (MCWMC)," Fernando said.

He said Metro Manila's two landfills in Montalban, Rizal and Navotas could still accomodate its trash for the next two years.

But the MMDA is reportedly looking into incinerators to solve its garbage problem, the INQUIRER learned. Fernando is reportedly talking to a Korean firm on the project. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

DVD DESTRUCTION
Videogram Regulatory Board Chairman Ramon 'Bong' Revilla (2nd from left) and NAIA Bureau of Customs District Collector Celso Templo (left) watch as a road roller crush more than a million pieces of pirated DVDs and VCDs, which were seized by customs personnel at the airport on Tuesday. ROGER MARGALLO

METROBRIEFS

Raps vs Romero

POLICE have filed Tuesday before the Rizal Prosecutor's Office charges of illegal possession of firearms and ammunitions against former Army Sgt. Rodolfo Romero, who is allegedly the brains behind a series of bank robberies in Metro Manila. Romero and 11 other suspected members of a bank robbery gang were arrested during a raid of Palar Village in Taguig last Sunday. Several firearms were also seized from Romero's house. But Romero said the firearms were merely "souvenirs" from his days with the Armed Forces of the Philippines. *Luige del Puerto*

Wild dance

AN EXHIBITIONIST landed in jail after dancing wildly on a rooftop in Marikina City on Tuesday. Residents also beat construction worker Gary Susi, 23, of Chorillo St., Barangay Barangka when he tried to elude arrest. According to the police, housewife Gina Santos, 34, of Block 30, Palay Street, Tumana District, heard some noise from her rooftop around 5 p.m. When she checked, she saw Susi dancing naked on the rooftop. She immediately called the authorities, who hauled Susi to jail after a brief chase. *Luige del Puerto*

Bike robbers

FOUR men were arrested yesterday while dismantling a motorcycle they allegedly had just stolen in Malabon City. Police identified the suspects as Virgilio Paner, 42, Alvin Geronimo, 31, and Randy Minoza, 20, all of Barangay Longos, Malabon City. The fourth suspect is a 16-year-old boy from Caloocan City. Police said the suspects stole a motorcycle from the JMM Repair Shop in Pampano Street, Barangay Longos around 3 a.m. A witness saw the theft and alerted the neighbors who chased the suspects. They managed to flee but later that day, a police team caught them while dismantling the bike. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Rowdy clearing ops

FOUR persons were reportedly hurt during separate sidewalk clearing operations conducted Tuesday by the Metro Manila Development Authority in Quezon City. Reported injured were Arrianne Farrales, 12, a grade six pupil and resident of Bago Bantay, Victor Evangelio and Ian Gonzaga, of Congressional Avenue; and Florencio Medrum, 27, of R. Lagmay Street, San Juan. Investigation showed that Farrales, Evangelio and Gonzaga were hurt when MMDA men cleared the front of Jonjay Food Supply on Congressional Avenue of vendors. Medrum, on the other hand, was allegedly beaten up by two MMDA men during an operation in Cubao. *Tina Santos*

Campaign management

RHETORICS Company will conduct a training seminar on political campaign management dubbed as "Running Campaigns in 2004 Elections" on Sept. 26 and 27 at The Meeting Place, InterContinental-Manila, Makati City. Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos and Prof. Felipe Miranda, chair of Pulse Asia, will head the cast of speakers who will talk on the best possible campaign strategies in the 2004 elections. Other speakers are Dr. Kavita Karan, assistant professor at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and former Comelec commissioner Teresita Flores.

HOOK of the week

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G/F Virra Mall Shopping Center, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila

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4/F Cyberzone Area, SM Megamall Bldg B, Mandaluyong City

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5th Level, The Podium, ADB Avenue Ortigas Center

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2nd Level Cyberzone Area SM Southmall, Alabang Zapote Rd., Pamplona, Las Piñas

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2/F Fairmart, Greenbelt, Makati City

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Anderson Bldg. II, Parian, Calamba, Laguna

CALAPAN (ORIENTAL MINDORO)
New Era bldg., J P Rizal St., Calapan, Oriental Mindoro

DAET (CAMARINES NORTE)
G/F Alegre Bldg., J. Lukban St., Daet, Camarines Norte

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G/F Guadalupe Plaza bldg., M.K. Lina St., Lipa City Batangas 4217

LUCENA (QUEZON)
173 Granja St., Lucena City

NAGA (CAMARINES SUR)
#41 Panganiban Drive, cor. Isarog St.,Naga City

PINAMALAYAN (ORIENTAL MINDORO)
G/F Tri Star Bldg., Francisco St., Pinamalayan Oriental Mindoro

PUERTO PRINCESA (PALAWAN)
Door 1 2/F Basa Bldg. National Highway San Pedro, Puerto Princesa City Palawan

SAN JOSE (OCCIDENTAL MINDORO)
J & S Bldg., Liboro St. San Jose Occidental Mindoro 5100

SAN PABLO (LAGUNA)
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G/F JRG Bldg., Mango Avenue, Cebu City

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ERC Bldg. Cor. Justice & Del Pilar Sts.,Tacloban City

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PAGADIAN WIRELESS CENTER
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Robinsons Place Manila
Level 3, Pedro Gil Wing, Robinsons Place Manila, Malate

Shangri La
Level 1 Shangri-la Mall, Shaw Blvd.

Shopwise Libis
G/F Shopwise Supermarket Libis, Quezon City

SM Centerpoint
3/L SM Centerpoint Ramon Magsaysay cor. Araneta Avenue, Sta Mesa

SM City Bacoor
Lower Ground, SM Bacoor Rotonda, Bacoor, Cavite

SM Sucat
3/F SM Sucat Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Brgy. San Dionisio, Parañaque City

SM North EDSA
G/F SM Car Park SM City North Edsa, Pag-asa 1, Quezon City

SM Megamall
5L Mega A. SM Megamall, Edsa, Mandaluyong

SM City Fairview
Stall 62 Lower Ground Regalado Ave., Quirino Hiway, Fairview

Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall
2/F Bridgeway Sta. Lucia East Grandmall Cainta, Rizal(in front of Scents & Fragrance)

Taft Central Exchange
G/F near LRT Entrance Gil Puyat cor Taft Ave Pasay City

Tutuban Mall
22/F Tutuban Mall

Zaberte Town Center Imus
G/F Zaberte Town Center

LUZON

Imus
2th Level, Robinson's Place, Imus, Cavite

Sta Rosa
3rd Level Robinson's Place Brg Tagapo, National hi-way Sta Rosa Laguna

Cabanatuan
Door 2 Sta Rina Bldg Maharlika Hi-way Cabanatuan City

Olongapo
G/F Ocampo Bldg., 960 Ave. East Tapinac, Olongapo City

SM Pampanga
Stole 151, SM City Pampanga, Mexico Olongapo Gapan Road, San Fernando City

Tarlac
Metrotown Extension Ctr. 3F Metrotown Mall Mc Arthur hi-way, Tarlac City

VISAYAS

SM City Iloilo
LGF SM City, Benigno Aquino Drive, Mandurriao, Iloilo City

SM City Cebu
3rd Level SM City North Reclamation Area,Cebu City

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SPORTS

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

14TH NCAA TITLE

Letran champ anew

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JONATHAN Piñera made back-to-back layups in the final minute as Letran survived a fourth-quarter scoring drought to defeat San Sebastian, 64-59, yesterday and capture its first NCAA men's basketball championship in four years at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Piñera's winning baskets, off the assists of Boyet Bautista and Ronjay Enrile, respectively, capped the Knights' resurgence after being held scoreless in the first seven minutes of the final period.

It also paved the way for Letran's 14th title overall, the last time in 1988-89 when the Knights ruled twice in a row. More importantly, the Knights cut short the Stags' dynasty which started two years ago.

"It feels good, I think the team deserves the championship because of all the effort we have put in it," said Letran coach Louie Alas. "I want to thank God, because it was really the hand of God that gave us the championship."

The 6-foot-5 Piñera, the Knights' second stringer center, seemed to embody that divine will as he found himself alone at the paint twice at crunch time.

The first time was in the last 46.1 seconds to give the Knights a 62-58 buffer. After a free throw by SSC's Michael Gonzales, Piñera again received the ball from a harassed Enrile to flick the championship layup with just 11.4 seconds left.

The Stags actually climbed from 11 points down to even lead by two points (58-56) with three minutes to go, gaining on the Knights' rash of errors and misses.

As if stung by a sorcerer's spell, the Knights just kept missing and losing the ball until Bautista hit a jumper in the last 2:12 to bring order back into their game.

Letran, which entered the game as underdog to the three-peat seeking SSC, took Game 1 with an 85-77 win before the Stags leveled the series with an 89-73 win in Game 2.

San Sebastian leaned on its height advantage to pound the shaded lane and post a 22-21 lead after the first quarter.

While working extra hard defending, the Knights also started connecting from long range through sharpshooters Aaron Aban and Boyet Bautista, whose triple midway in the second period gave Letran an 11-point edge, 36-25.

The expected pelting session—which also occurred in Games 1 and 2—took place in the 6:06 of the third quarter when the game barker threatened to suspend the game after the crowd threw things like coins, plastic bottles and ice cubes onto the court.

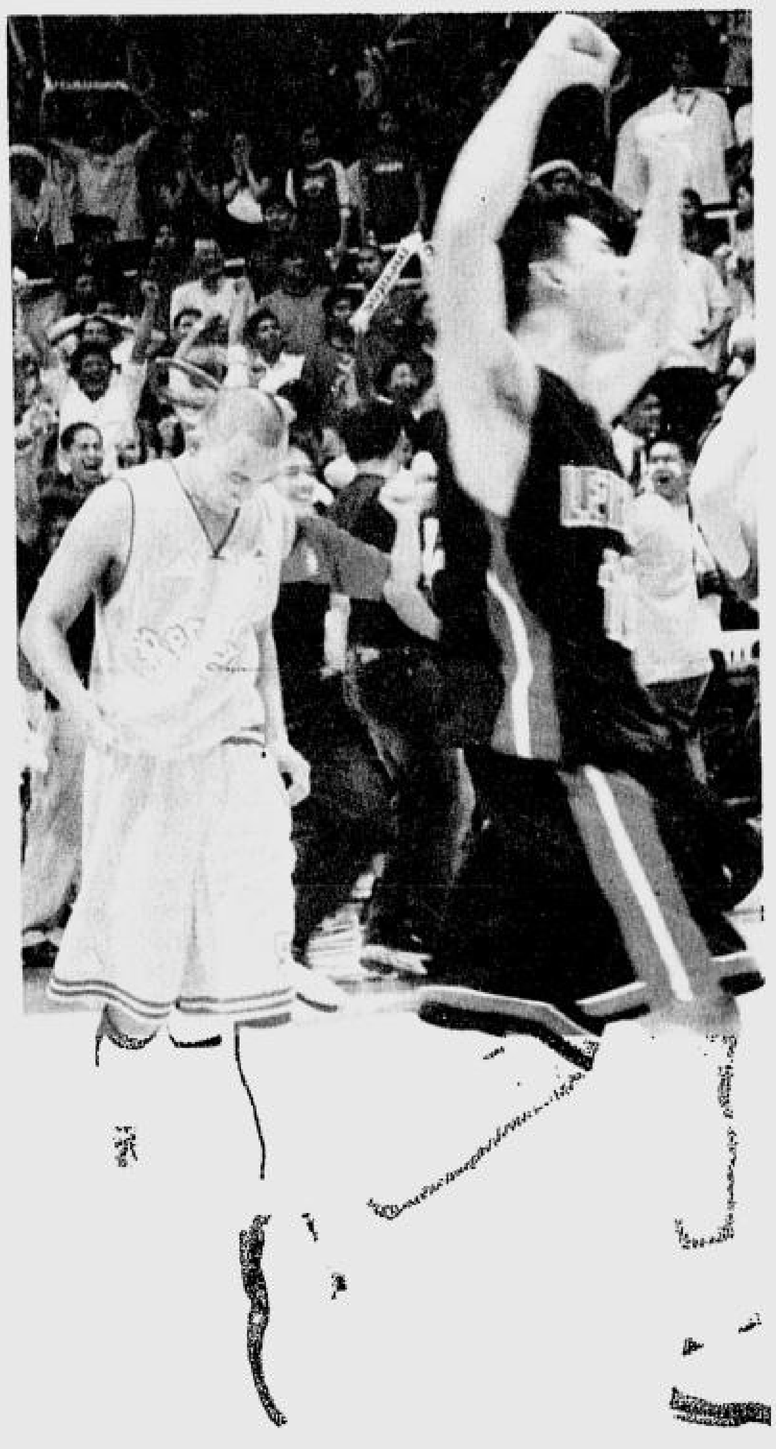
NCAA commissioner Graham Lim lauded the school officials, board members, referees and technical men for the tournament's successful staging.

Scores:

LETRAN 64—Bautista 19, Enrile 19, Aban 13, Piñera 6, Santos 3, Rodriguez 2, Aldave 2, Fedelicio 0, Reyes 0, realista 0, Arabo 0.

SSC-R 59—Uy 18, Gonzales 10, Baluyot 9, Najorda 7, Rebuya 5, Moore 4, Legarde 4, Maneclang 2, Vicente 0, Aguilar 0.

Quarters: 21-22, 44-50, 56-50, 64-59.



LETRAN'S Jonathan Pinera (right) jubilates while San Sebastian's Nicole Uy (left) agonizes after the Knights won the NCAA championship yesterday.

ERNIE SARMIENTO

Sta. Lucia downs FedEx; Coke wins

GAMES TOMORROW (Cuneta Astrodome)
5 p.m.—Purefoods vs San Miguel Beer
7:30 p.m.—Red Bull vs Coca-Cola

By June Navarro

STA. Lucia Realty bottled up Terrence Shannon in the second half and ran several back-breaking fastbreak plays to turn back Federal Express, 77-71, last night in the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference at the Makati Coliseum.

The Realtors limited Shannon to a measly three points in the final half while getting a big lift from their locals to erase an 11-point deficit en route to their fourth win in five games.

Marlou Aquino, Dennis Espino and Jason Webb combined splendidly with Nate James, turning the Realtors' fate around entering the fourth quarter.

"We patiently cut down the lead by getting the needed baskets from the locals while putting up a zone defense which FedEx failed to solve," said Sta. Lucia coach Alfrancis Chua.

Instead of deploying shooters on the floor, Chua said FedEx interim coach Jojo Villa miscalculated by sending his big men—Yancy De Ocampo, Jerry Codiñera and Shannon—to break the stingy zone defense put up by the Realtors.

That coaching lapse proved too costly for the Express as the Bert Lina-owned ballclub suffered their second straight defeat for a 2-4 win-loss record.

Still, the Express settled at solo second, two games behind the Realtors in Group A.

Unbeaten Coca-Cola zoomed to its fifth win following an overwhelming 121-86 victory over Barangay Ginebra in the second game.

The Kings, who played without the injured Eric Menk and Jun Limpot, suffered their second straight defeat and tied Red Bull Barako at 3-2.

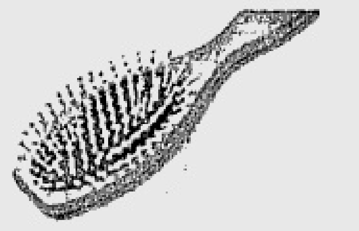
Meanwhile, Red Bull Barako dealt slotman Ryzal Castro and Anton Villoria to San Miguel Beer in exchange for a second-round pick either next year or 2005.

Scores:

STA. LUCIA 77—James 27, Aquino 24, Espino 8, Bat-og 6, Webb 5, Francisco 5, Adriano 2, Santos 0, Victolero 0, Ong 0, Mendoza 0, Tan 0.

FEDEX 71—Shannon 18, Meneses 8, Arboleda 8, Ferriols 7, Yap 7, Ortiguerra 6, Ritualo 5, Billones 4, Codiñera 4, Rodriguez 2, De Ocampo 2, Barnardo 0, Ejercito 0.

Quarters: 22-29, 34-46, 57-60, 77-71.



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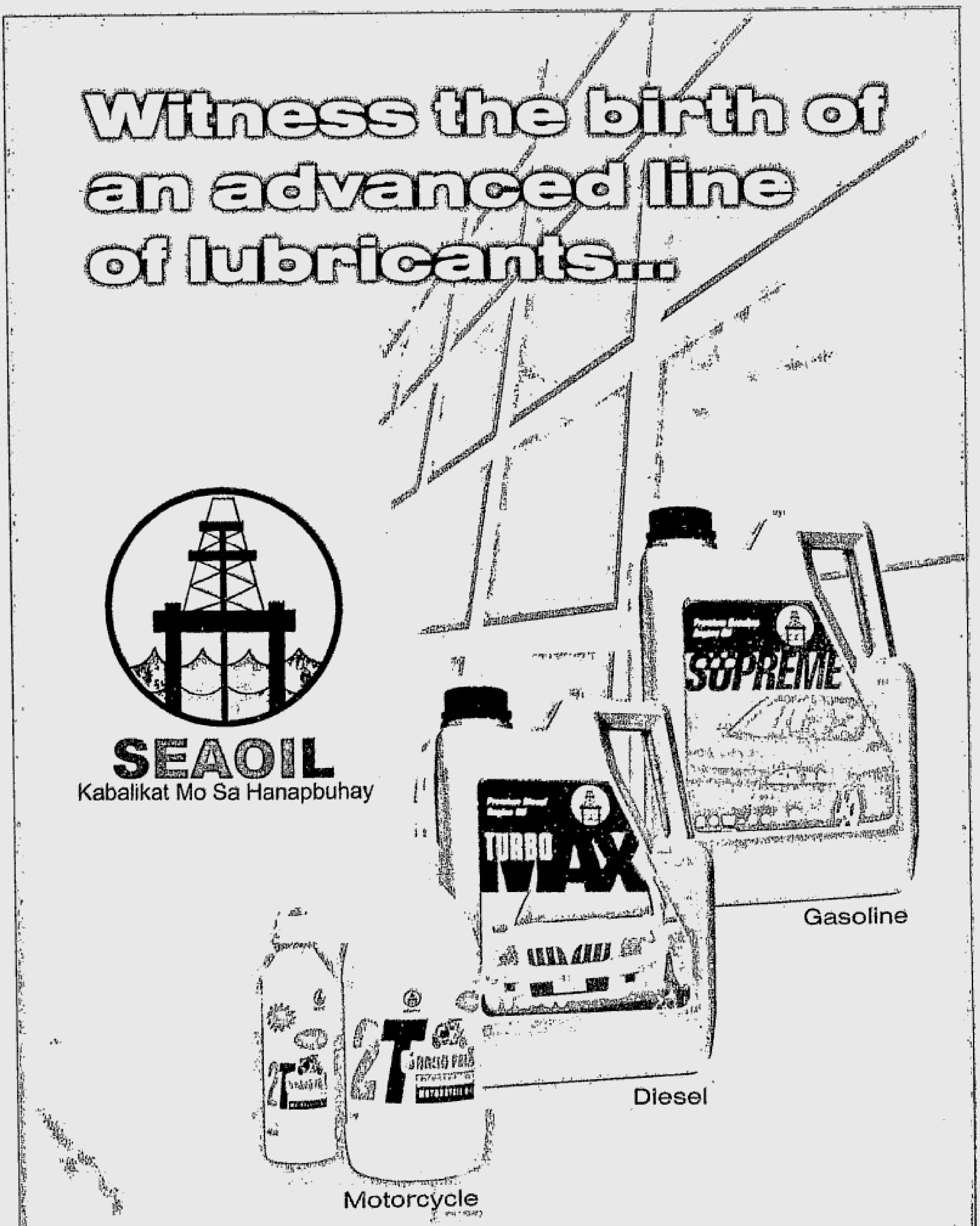
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DECISION REVERSED

DOJ ruling: Eala liable for adultery

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has recommended the filing of adultery charges against Philippine Basketball Association Commissioner Jose Manuel Eala and his companion Irene Moje.

In a five-page resolution, Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong reversed on Monday the decision of the Quezon City prosecutor's office to drop the adultery case against the couple.

Datumanong sided with the charge of complainant Joselano Guevarra, Moje's erstwhile husband, that the couple were liable for adultery, especially after they had a baby girl, who was born on Feb. 14, 2002.

"What finally militates against the respondents is the indubitable fact that in the certificate of birth of the girl, Moje furnished the information that Eala was the father," Datumanong said.

"This speaks all too eloquently of the unlawful and damning nature of the adulterous acts of the respondents," he said.

"(Guevarra's) supposed illegal procurement of the brith certificate is most certainly beside the point for both respondents Eala and Moje have not denied, in any categorical manner, that Eala is the father of the child," Datumanong added.

EALA

Guevarra and Moje were married on Oct. 7, 2000 at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine in New Manila, Quezon City. Ironically, Guevarra later found a love letter from Eala to his wife dated Oct. 7.

Datumanong also noted that Moje had conceded that she dated Eala and that Guevarra even saw them together on two occasions inside a car in Ortigas Centre during the early part of 2001.

Moje allegedly did not return to their home in Pasig after the two incidents. She allegedly did not even invite Guevarra to her 25th birthday party.

When Guevarra went there uninvited, he was surprised to see Moje celebrating with Eala.

"This caused a great deal of embarrassment on complainant's part and so he left feeling humiliated and hurt," Datumanong said.

"Eala never denied the fact that he knew Moje to be married to complainant. In fact, (Eala) himself was married to another woman," Datumanong added.

Moje returned to their Pasig house, together with her parents, on April 2001 but only to get her belongings. She allegedly then started living with Eala at No. 71-B 11th St. in New Manila.

Datumanong said Moje's abandonment of her home and her subsequent relocation to New Manila only confirmed the illicit relationship between Eala and Moje.

"It was in this place (in New Manila) that the two lovers apparently cohabited. Especially since Eala's vehicle and that of Moje's were always seen there. Moje herself admits that that she came to live in the said address whereas Eala asserts that that was where he held office," Datumanong said.

"The happenstance that it was in that address that Eala and Moje had decided to hold office for the firm that both had formed smacks too much of a coincidence...It was both respondents' love nest, to put (it) short," he added.

Datumanong also dismissed the respondents' contention that the Quezon City Regional Trial Court nullified Moje's marriage to Guevarra on March 31.

"The complaint for adultery against respondents was filed way before the declaration of the nullity of marriage between (Guevarra) and (Moje)," Datumanong said.

PBA head to exhaust legal steps

By June Navarro

WHILE saying the adultery charge slapped against him is purely private in nature, embattled PBA Commissioner Noli Eala yesterday said he would exhaust all legal means to settle the case once and for all.

"It's purely a private and personal matter that in no way could affect on how I carry out my duties as commissioner of the PBA," said Eala.

The commissioner added he would file a new round of pleadings to appeal the decision of the Department of Justice.

"Our legal position was not fully appreciated. We will just look for ways and means to settle the issue justly," Eala told the INQUIRER.

The justice department reversed an earlier ruling by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, which dumped the adultery case filed against Eala early this year.

"This case is no longer new to me. It's the same case which was lamentably released to the media last year for no apparent reason at all," said Eala.

Kobe should play—Stern

LOS ANGELES—Kobe Bryant should continue to play this season, despite facing trial on a sexual assault charge in Colorado, NBA commissioner David Stern said. "Absolutely," Stern told the Los Angeles Times in an article published Tuesday. *AFP*

NATE James and Leo Bat-og of the Sta. Lucia Realty battle Terrence Shannon of FedEx for ball possession during their PBA game last night. Story on A19. RUDY ESPERAS

Japan nips RP five

HARBIN, China—The Philippines-Cebuana Lhuillier yielded to highly favored Japan, 66-64, at the start of the 22nd ABC Championship Tuesday at the Heida Gym here.

Hardly bothered by Japan's height and heft advantage, the Nationals, bannered by Celino Cruz, Willy Wilson and power-playing Ricky Calimag, dictated the tempo in the early going only to lose steam down the stretch.

In Group C, defending champion China got 18 points, 12 rebounds and five blocked shots from NBA star Yao Ming, as it whipped Syria, 103-51.

Other results saw Uzbekistan down Hong Kong, 68-64; Lebanon beat Kazakhstan, 79-70; and India trip Kuwait, 94-74.

Six-foot-11 slotman Aono stood at the forefront of Japan's attack as he hit two free throws to make it 66-61, but Cruz, who led the Philippines' spirited attack, buried a triple to make it 66-64.

The Philippines also bowed to Qatar, 77-69, yesterday and was relegated to the consolation pool.

Hot News For Your Health!

Mother's Best Hot Sauce is good for your heart.

Mother's Best Hot Sauce contains capsaicin, a compound found in hot peppers such as siling labuyo that may lower your risk for cardiovascular diseases. Research indicates that capsaicin not only helps improve circulation of the blood, it also helps decrease the clotting potential of your blood, preventing blockages in the arteries of the heart and brain that lead to heart attacks and strokes.

Why China is tops

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THOSE who continue to wonder why China won the most number of gold medals in the just-concluded 15th Asian Athletics Championship, wonder no more. The feat is actually no big deal. It's been written in the stars.

Ever since China opened its doors to the world in the '60s, it's been proving to all and sundry that it has become a power in virtually all facets of life.

It has bombs capable of leveling Asia, if not the world. We only have but a few *kwitis*, super *lolos* if you will, to ward off bad spirits during the New Year revelry.

It has the weaponry capable of engaging the United States head-on in case of a third world war. We only have *paltiks* from Danao City against America's *balikatan* combatants.

And, yes, the obvious: It has the population to defeat the army of any nation on sheer numbers alone. We have an army as fragmented and as fractured as the logic of the boxing judges about giving the fight to Mosley because Mosley had landed more powerful punches than De La Hoya.

China, the sleeping giant, has awakened and the world trembles in its wake.

To China, the Asian Athletics Championship is but a forum to test its second-stringers. Third stringers even. Athletes from its farm teams are better sent to tournaments that are not of so much consequence. And, with due respect to the meet's organizers, the Asian Athletics Championship is but one of them.

Know why?

China is not called world power in sports for nothing.

In the Olympic Games, Asia has China to represent Asia's interest. The Olympiad consistently allows China to give the United States a run for its money. That also holds true in the World Championship, where China always gives the US and other so-called world sports powers a good fight in the race for the gold medals.

For years now, China has been embarking on a multibillion-peso program to develop world caliber athletes. That is not surprising. China is first world country and, thus, has the economic power to finance such a project. As I keep saying here, only a progressive economy can sustain a healthy sports program.

We are third world and that makes for a sports setup that sorely lacks for consistency. Our sports mainly relies on the kindness of the private sector; the government cannot really treat sports as a priority as poverty pervades in the country. What more proof would you need to back this up than the President's no-show at the opening ceremonies of the Asian Athletics event.

Japan did not fare well, winning only one gold medal to China's top-ranking 19. But that's understandable. Like China, Japan also loves to send its farm teams to tournaments outside of the Olympiad and the World Championship.

We fielded in our best. We won but only two bronze medals, one better than Indonesia's take. But if I know Indonesia, it also sent its second-stringers. It is saving its best for the SEA Games this December in Vietnam.

What's to be learned from our haul of only two bronze medals?

Simple. We are way below world standards. We can't even beat our SEA neighbors Myanmar, which had two gold medals, and Thailand and Vietnam, which had a gold medal apiece.

But that's no reason to be sad, or sulk about. We tied for 18th with Malaysia (two bronze medals each) in a field of 42 nations. Not really that bad.

If at all, we still emerged victorious, if only in the area of staging the event. It was a tremendous success-in spite of the Palace snub.

***

FASTBREAK. Lara Mae Divina has been promoted marketing manager and community relations head of the National Basketball Development League (NBDL), the NBA's minor league, for the Washington Wizards. She is the daughter of Manuel and Lauren Divina of Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija. More importantly, Lara Mae is the niece of Percy Della, the chief information officer of California based in Sacramento. Percy, now an INQUIRER contributor, was a Filipino sportswriter before he moved to the US in the '70s.

Iverson OKs $76-M deal with Sixers

IVERSON

PHILADELPHIA—Allen Iverson and the Philadelphia 76ers have agreed on a $76.7 million, four-year contract extension, a team source said Tuesday.

The deal will keep the three-time NBA scoring champion in Philadelphia through the 2008-09 season.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the 76ers will announce the deal at a special event for season ticket-holders Wednesday night at the Wachovia Center. The contract extension was first reported on the Philadelphia Inquirer's website.

Iverson has one year plus an option remaining on his current deal, which will pay him more than $28 million over the next two years. The extension begins in 2005-06. *AP*

Eagles, Tams eye final slots

By Dennis U . Eroa

GAMES TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m.—FEU vs UE (Srs)
4 p.m.—La Salle vs Ateneo (Srs)

TO SURVIVE rival Ateneo, four-time champion La Salle needs to hurdle three obstacles in today's UAAP Final Four at the Araneta Coliseum.

The league's strongest starting five, historical trend, and the absence of its top playmaker.

Ateneo starters Larry Fonacier, Wesley Gonzales, Magnum Membrere, Paolo Bugia and Rich Alvarez are definitely hard to match.

History is against La Salle. Since the Final Four started in 1994, no fourth-ranked team has ever beaten the frontrunner twice to enter the best-of-three championship series.

La Salle, beaten twice by Ateneo in the elims, will be missing the explosive Marc Cardona, who injured his left ankle during the Archers' controversial clash against the UE Warriors on Sept. 18.

Ateneo, which is seeking its second straight championship, guns for the final against La Salle at 4 p.m.

FEU, which also enjoys a twice-to-beat advantage, tackles UE in the 2 p.m. opener.

Victories by Ateneo and FEU will lead to the league's first ever "Holy War."

The Banal brothers, Joel and Koy, are coach of the Eagles and the Tamaraws, respectively.

Sans Cardona, coach Franz Pumaren will be hard-pressed to find the right offensive mix to counter Ateneo's deadly starters.

Larry Fonacier, Wesley Gonzales, Magnum Membrere and Paolo Bugia have the penchant for scoring at will, while two-time MVP Rich Alvarez has extracted the best from his teammates with his leadership and all-around plays.

"The Archers mustn't be taken for granted. We've prepared with or without Cardona," said Joel Banal.

He's right.

With pride at stake, La Salle isn't just going to roll and die.

Joseph Casio, the hot choice as rookie of the year, will now carry the Archers' scoring chores along with fellow newcomer Ryan Arana and Joseph Yeo.

Another rookie Jerwin Gaco will battle Alvarez and Bugia underneath. Carlo Sharma and Manny Ramos must wake up to give La Salle the lift.

If any consolation, starter Tyrone Tang will be back but he must learn to keep pace with the slippery Lewis Tenorio, whose three straight triples in the third quarter provided Ateneo the boost in its 98-89 win in the second round.

Eaglets subdue Bengals, advance; Lady Falcons prevail

ATENEO, last year's losing finalist, made a giant leap to regain its title by turning back hard-fighting La Salle-Zobel, 73-67, in the Final Four of the UAAP junior basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

Enjoying a twice-to-beat advantage, the Eaglets banked on a blistering fourth-quarter assault anchored on Ken Barracoso and Mark Intal to tame the Bengals.

Ateneo will meet the winner between Adamson and Santo Tomas in the other Final Four pairing in the best-of-three title series. The Eaglets lost to the UP Preps in last year's finals.

In the the second game, favorite Adamson routed Ateneo, 74-54, to enter the women's basketball finals. Dorothy Torres led the Lady Falcons with 24 points.

The Lady Falcons will meet the UP Lady Maroons, who repulsed titleholder La Salle Lady Archers, 49-42, in the other semis pairing.

Dennis U. Eroa

SPORTSWATCH

WBA approves GAB proposals

BALI, Indonesia—A code of ethics for boxing officials proposed by Games and Amusements Board chair Eduardo Villanueva was among four motions unanimously approved Tuesday by the boxing fraternity attending the World Boxing Association's annual convention here. WBA Gilberto Mendoza graced the convention presided over by Pan-Asia Boxing Association secretary general Alan Kim. Aside from the ethics code, Villanueva and GAB commissioner Emmanuel Palabrica had proposed the adoption of a letter of authority for all boxers and the prompt payment of fighters' purses seeing action on foreign soil. Also approved was the mandatory weigh-in of boxers 30 and seven days before Paba bouts to ensure their fitness. Aside from Villanueva, the other Filipino delegates here include Cebu promoters Terry Carter, Sammy Gello-ani, Joy Ouano, boxing officials Silvestre Abainza and Ferdinand Estrella and Johnny Elorde. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

New foes for Tuñacao, Rubillar

MALCOLM "Eagle Eye" Tuñacao and Ernesto "Hard Rock" Rubillar, the main attractions in Friday's "The Great Encounter" at Ynares Center in Antipolo City, will face new opponents after their Indonesian challengers backed out. Promoter Gabriel "Bebot" Elorde Jr. tapped another veteran Indonesian fighter, Ringo Jaguar, to replace Ali Rohmad as Tunacao's foe for the vacant WBC international super-flyweight belt and Valencia, Bukidnon's Arman De la Cruz, WBC No. 24 light fly, to substitute for Iwan Key as Rubillar's challenger for the WBC International minimumweight title. *Rey Danseco, contributor*

Puerto bets near sepak crown

PUERTO Princesa City— PPC-A moved a win shy of the under-21 title of the 2003 National Men and Women Open and 21 Years and Below Sepak Takraw Championships Tuesday. PPC-A beat Muntinlupa City, 21-11, 19-21, 15-13; PPC-B, 21-16, 18-21, 15-9; PPC-C, 21-9, 21-16; and Lubao Pampanga-A, 21-18, 21-11, in the matches played at the Dr. Higenio Mendoza Park in Puerto Princesa, Palwan. Another host team, PPC-B, stayed in the running for second place as it posted two wins in four matches, the same slate as the Puerto Princesa-based Palawan State University-A (PSU-A). PPC-B added some premium to the host's reputation as the sepak takraw capital of the country and got its victories at the expense of PSU-A, 13-21, 21-15,15-7 and PPC-C, 21-16, 21-19.

Southwoods gets boost from Samsung

SAMSUNG Electronics Philippines became the fifth corporate partner of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club after signing a year-long deal with the club yesterday. Mitsubishi Motors, Northwest Airlines, Royal Caribbean International-Baron Travel Corp., Thai Airways and Wilson Sports are the other companies with long-term sponsorship contracts. Under the agreement, Samsung will support the club's sports programs. "The club is very happy with this development. We extend our deepest gratitude to Samsung for the support for our awaited golf events," said Freddie Mendoza, Manila Southwoods' chair for sports and games.

Orchard hosting KGB golf meet

THE ORCHARD Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite, will be the venue for the monthly tournament of the Kapisanan ng mga Golfers sa Brodkast (KGB) tomorrow, Sept. 26. Prime target for the broadcast golfers is the overall monthly championship which will qualify the winner for the Battle of Champions this December. Signature KGB trophies are also at stake for the winners in Class A, B and C as well as the ladies' and guest divisions. The 18-hole medal play tourney is supported by TaylorMade, Coca Cola Bottlers and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Registration will start promptly at 6:45 a.m. with the first flight teeing off at 7 a.m.

Age-group triathlon slated Sunday

A GROUP of executives, managers, professors, sports enthusiasts and newcomers will flock to Narra Park in Ayala Alabang Village at 6:30 a.m. this coming Sunday for the final leg of the 2003 Enervon National Age-Group Triathlon (NAGT) series. Among those participating are Alaska Milk's Fred Uytengsu and Nona Torres, POC's Carlos Santos-Viola, Rudy Dizon, Diana Manalo, Corrine Lee, Larry De Ocampo, Ricky Frias, Andy Aguila and Rhonniel Caringal. The event is sponsored by Speedo, Enervon, Monoc Bike Frames, Reliv Philippines, Philippine Sports Commission and the Ayala Alabang Village Association (Aava). For inquries, call the TRAP at 0916-2653109, 0920-6030898 and 0916-4494789 while Aava can be reached at 807-0501.

Int'l juniors netfest set Oct. 6-12

A TOTAL OF 78 players from eight countries will see action in the Enervon Tablet-Futures Foundation International Juniors Tennis Championships slated Oct. 6-12 at the Ynares Socio-Cultural Sports Center in Pasig City. The qualifying round will be on Oct. 4-5. The Group 5 event is sanctioned by the International Tennis Federation. Spearheading the country's bid are Irwin de Guzman, Michael Basco, Pablo Olivarez II, Kyle Dandan, Ralph Barte, Czarina Mae Arevalo, Alyssa Labay, Catherine Flores, Bien Zoleta and Bernardine Sepulveda. Enervon Tablet (United Laboratories), Futures Tennis Scholarship Foundation, The Phinma Group, adidas Philippines, Prince rackets, Toby's Sports, Viva Mineral Water, Nassau balls, Coke Light and Powerade are sponsoring the meet organized by the Philippine Tennis Association (Philta).

CYCLING POLLS Asian Cycling Confederation president Dato Seri Darshan Singh (right) congratulates Robert "Leo" Magaway for topping the Philippine Amateur Cycling Asociation (Paca) elections on Sept. 14 at the Amoranto Sports Complex. The election of the executive board will be held on Sept. 27 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Yankees clinch 6th straight East crown

CHICAGO—Jason Giambi hit a grand slam in the ninth inning, and Jose Contreras struck out a career-high nine Tuesday night as the Yankees clinched their sixth straight American League East title with a 7-0 victory over the Chicago White Sox.

"No, it doesn't get old," New York's Derek Jeter said as he watched his teammates spray each other with champagne in the clubhouse. "We've been playing from the middle of February to be in this position right here, to win the division. It's worth celebrating."

Nick Johnson and Juan Rivera hit solo homers, and Hideki Matsui drove in his team-high 106th RBI for the Yankees, who last Saturday assured themselves of no worse than the wild-card berth.

Chicago was eliminated from contention with the loss, its ninth in 13 games.

In Minneapolis, Cristian Guzman went 2-for-2 with a homer and two runs as Minnesota clinched its second straight AL Central title by beating Cleveland 4-1 for its 10th consecutive win.

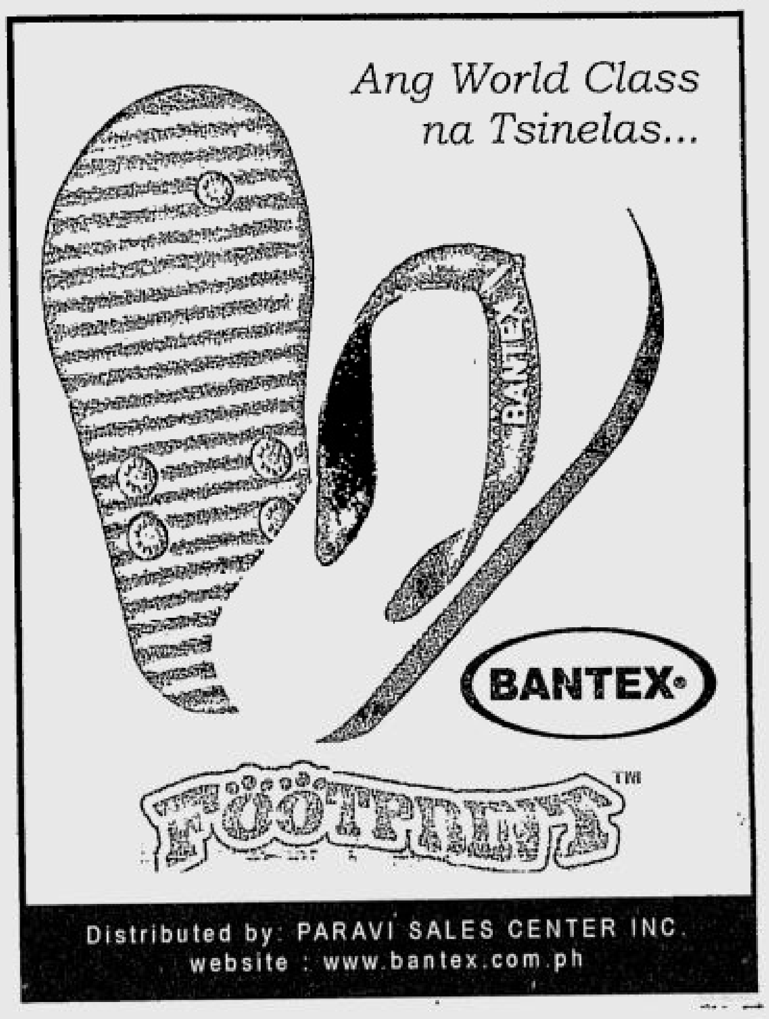
Kenny Rogers (13-8) came within one out of a shutout, allowing a two-out RBI single to Josh Bard. Eddie Guardado finished for his 40th save.

Shannon Stewart drove in two runs.

In Oakland, California, the Oakland Athletics beat the Texas Rangers 4-3 and clinched their second straight AL West title behind Adam Melhuse's RBI single in the 10th off Texas pitcher Francisco Cordero (5-8), who blew his league-high 10th save.

In Kansas City, Missouri, Warren Morris, Craig Monroe and A.J. Hinch all homered as Detroit (39-118) stopped a 10-game losing streak with a 15-6 win over Kansas City.

The Tigers scored their most runs since getting 19 against Texas on Aug. 8, 2001. *AP*



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RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA
BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Strong Colony 2. Little Sam 3. Free Again 4. Dangerous Beauty

Race 2--1. Cover Girl 2. Seven Lakes 3. Little Girl 4. Aspire 5. Pure Luck

Race 3--1. War Hero 2. Hezagonebabes 3. Day and Night

Race 4--1. Tool Pusher 2. Order of Merit 3. Daytona 4. Doctor Ben 5. Star Emblem

Race 5--1. Super Cool 2. Musikero 3. Prickly Heat 4. Slew's Pleasure

Race 6--1. Golden Moment 2. Winning Post 3. Suterian Era 4. Rumba 5. King Yoji

Race 7--1. Loose Cannon 2. Celebration 3. Silver Dollar 4. Letshaveaparty 5. Expediter

Race 8--1. Storm Princess 2. Epic Energy 3. El Magnifico 4. Top Mark

Race 9--1. Hope/Brenda Starr 2. Cash Position 3. Love Triangle 4. Moore Magic 5. Color of the Wind 6. Rose and Toy

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

TENNIS: Davis Cup 2003, 10 p.m., Solar Sports - See the Spanish Armada battle Argentina in the semifinals

BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Games-Suns vs Celtics, Game 5 1976 Finals, 8 a.m., Solar Sports- Check out the game that would never end between Phoenix and Boston.

NBA Summer League-Portland vs Utah, 11 a.m. (r-8 p.m.), Solar Sports-The Blazers take on the Jazz in this summer spectacle.

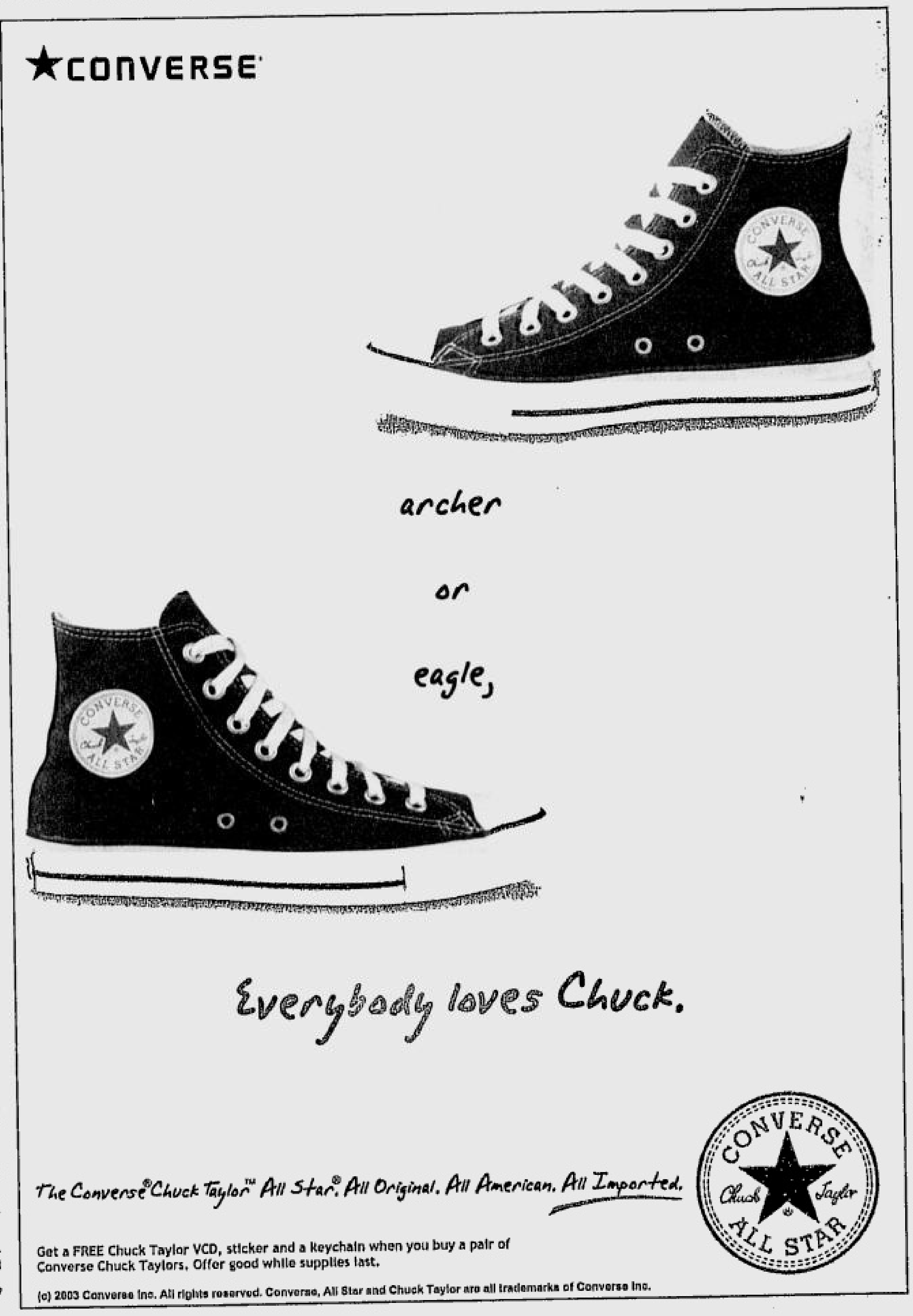
2003 Tournament of the Americas; 4 p.m.; Solar Sports - Rewind to another crucial match in the Olympic qualifier for the Americas.

SWIMMING: FINA Grand Prix; [illegible] p.m., Solar Sports - Viva Mexico! The best tankers make waves in the pool

BOWLING Aviva Asian Bowling Tour, 8:30 a.m. (r), ESPN * Take another look at the semifinals and finals from Bangkok.

GOLF LPGA Tulsa Championship, 1:30 p.m., ESPN * Find out who survives the cut.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.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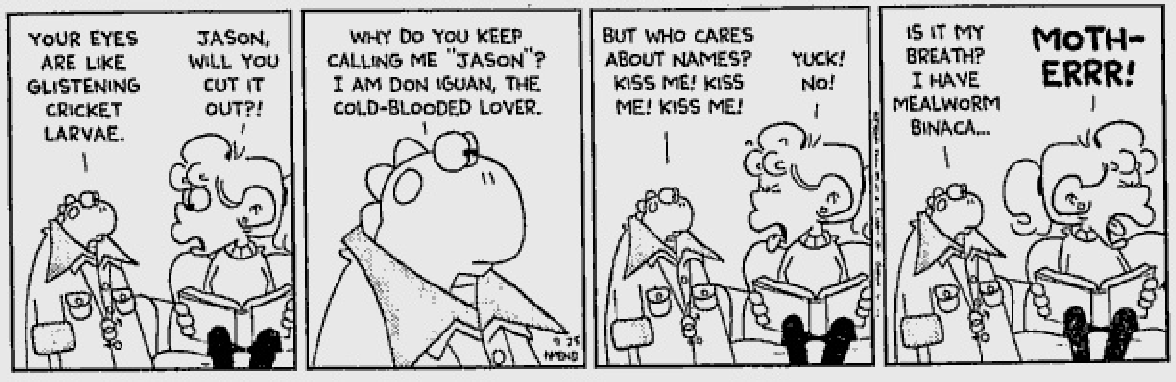
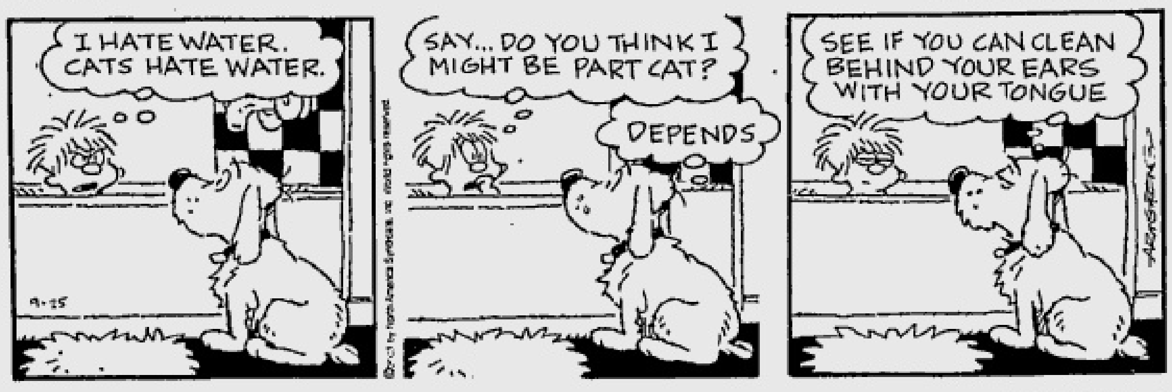
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


YOUR EYES ARE LIKE GLISTENING CRICKET LARVAE.
JASON, WILL YOU CUT IT OUT?!
WHY DO YOU KEEP CALLING ME "JASON"? I AM DON IGUAN, THE COLD-BLOODED LOVER.
BUT WHO CARES ABOUT NAMES? KISS ME! KISS ME! KISS ME!
YUCK! NO!
IS IT MY BREATH? I HAVE MEALWORM BINACA...
MOTH-ERRR!
9-25 AMEND

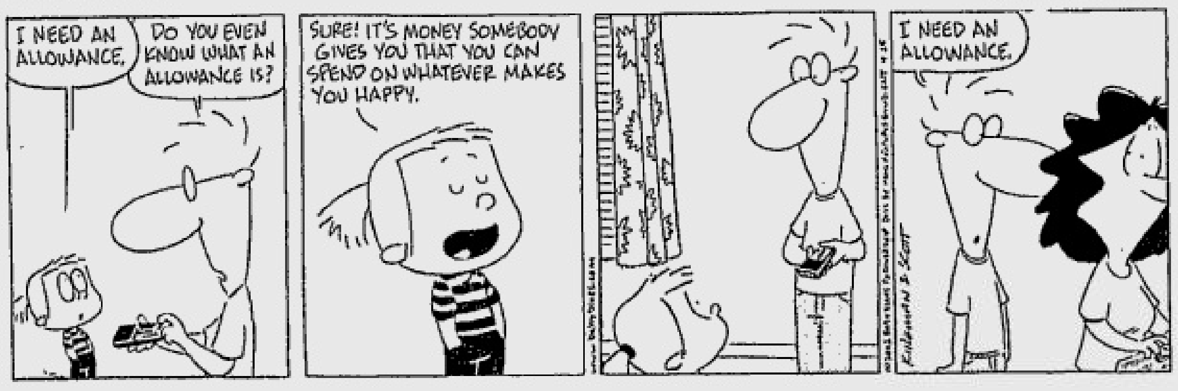
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I HATE WATER. CATS HATE WATER.
SAY... DO YOU THINK I MIGHT BE PART CAT?
DEPENDS
SEE IF YOU CAN CLEAN BEHIND YOUR EARS WITH YOUR TONGUE
9-25
ARMSTRONG

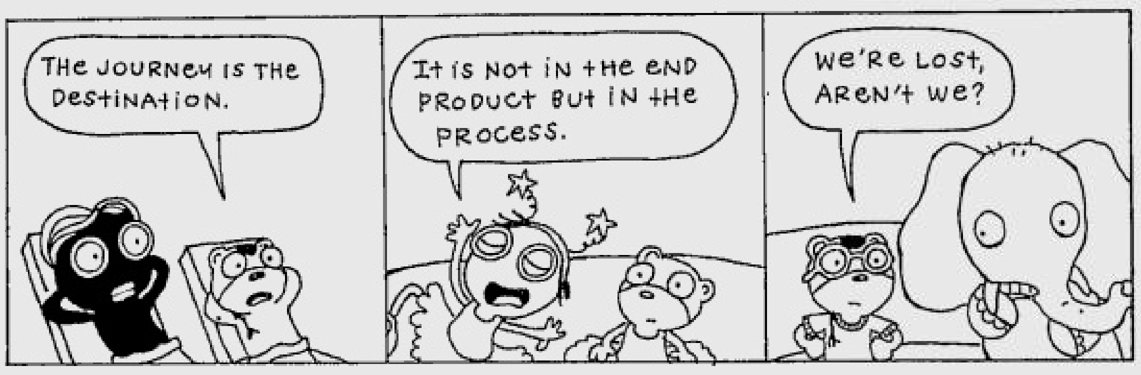
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I NEED AN ALLOWANCE.
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT AN ALLOWANCE IS?
SURE! IT'S MONEY SOMEBODY GIVES YOU THAT YOU CAN SPEND ON WHATEVER MAKES YOU HAPPY.
I NEED AN ALLOWANCE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


The journey is the destination.
It is not in the end product but in the process.
We're lost, aren't we?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: The secret to your success is that you are hard-working and goal-oriented. You know what you want, and you go after it. This clarity of purpose is invaluable. Added to this, you are determined. You are also very aware of your environment. You will have to make some important choices in the year ahead. **Birthdate of:** Will Smith, actor; Michael Douglas, actor; Christopher Reeve, actor/director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might feel fearful about close relationships today. Don't let this get you down. What's happening is that feelings of insecurity and doubt are surfacing. Give them little thought.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Co-workers might criticize your efforts today. What they think about you has nothing to do with who you really are. Don't be guided by the opinions of others.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You might find you don't have enough money to do something that is fun or entertaining today. Join the club. We number millions.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Family members (especially parents) might be critical of your actions today. The truth is, you can never please everybody. Therefore, just please yourself.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Don't worry about everything that you have set in motion. Naturally, there will be glitches. That is the nature of the beast. Relax and believe in yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might have to pay a friend some money or settle a debt with a group today. You feel financially squeezed by trying to keep up with the gang.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's not easy to please bosses and authority figures today. Therefore, this is not the day to present your ideas to people. Play your cards close to your chest.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Do not let feelings of self-doubt hold you back today. The difference between an amateur and a professional is that the professional throws away his best work.

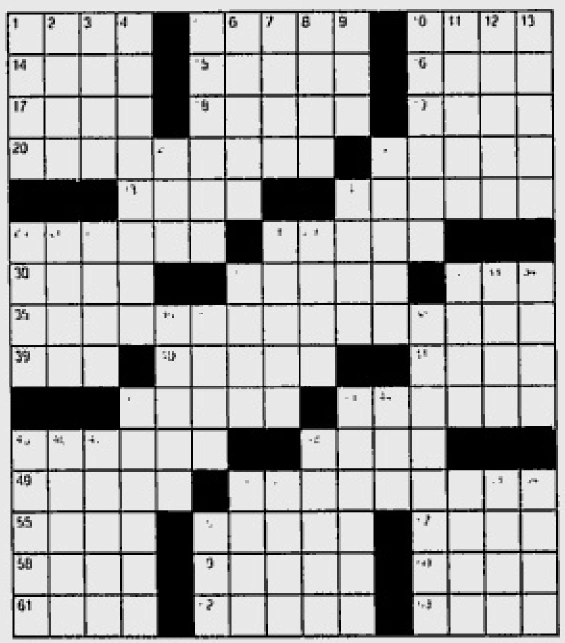
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): An older friend might give you advice today. However, it might be something you don't want to hear. Remember—you don't have to follow it. It's just something to consider.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might have to lay down the law with a partner or close friend today. You see the limitations of a particular situation. Furthermore, common sense dictates that you operate within these limitations.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Others are not as excited about travel plans or educational ideas as you had hoped. Don't worry; it's not necessary to change your plans. This is not a good day to be demanding about legal matters.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Romantic relationships are a bit difficult today. People don't feel open or forthcoming. Don't worry about this; just try to stay positive within your own frame of mind.

DAILY CROSSWORD



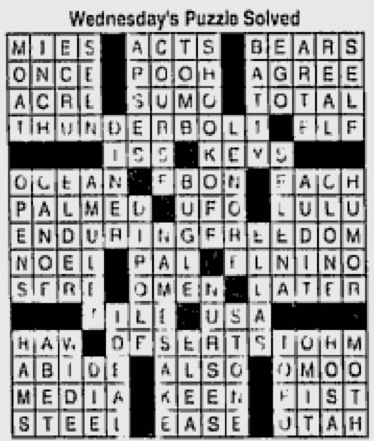
By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

9/25/03

ACROSS
1 Move slightly
5 Points of embarkation
10 Play parts
14 Despise
15 Mystery story?
16 Piece of equipment
17 Chilled
18 Spring bloomer
19 Travel before takeoff
20 Start of Calvin Coolidge quote
22 Become established
23 Follow the winner
24 Sun shield
25 Hidden
28 First course
30 Sharif of films
31 "The __ of Wakefield"
32 City near Lourdes
35 Part 2 of quote
39 Lunched
40 Taylor or Adoree
41 Small singing group
42 Throws
43 Tete toppers
45 Fine-tune
48 Exclusive
49 Barbarian
50 End of quote
55 Redhead Lucille
56 Shoelace end
57 Call from the crib
58 Fencer's foil
59 Below, in poems
60 Tied
61 Clan division
62 Edgy
63 Relative position

DOWN
1 Something to bark
2 Tex-Mex order
3 News piece
4 Danger period
5 Most wan
6 Ms. Oyl
7 Stir up
8 Skier's ride
9 As written
10 Join the audience
11 Raccoon cousin
12 Poisonous substance
13 Supporting loop
21 Neither fish fowl
22 Crowd of bees
24 Jai
25 Pop choice
26 Leave out
27 Flower holder
28 Opposing teams
29 Belly problem
31 Jacket slit
32 Pierre's pop
33 Landed
34 ETs' rides
36 Obliterate
37 Brooding place
38 Decorative strip
42 Veal slice
43 Clare [illegible]
44 Santa's helper
45 French clerics
46 Hang in loose folds
47 Syrupy drink
48 Editorial directives
50 S-shaped molding
51 __ Bator, Mongolia
52 Island near Sumatra
53 Warning sign
54 Lending institution
56 Industrious insect

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



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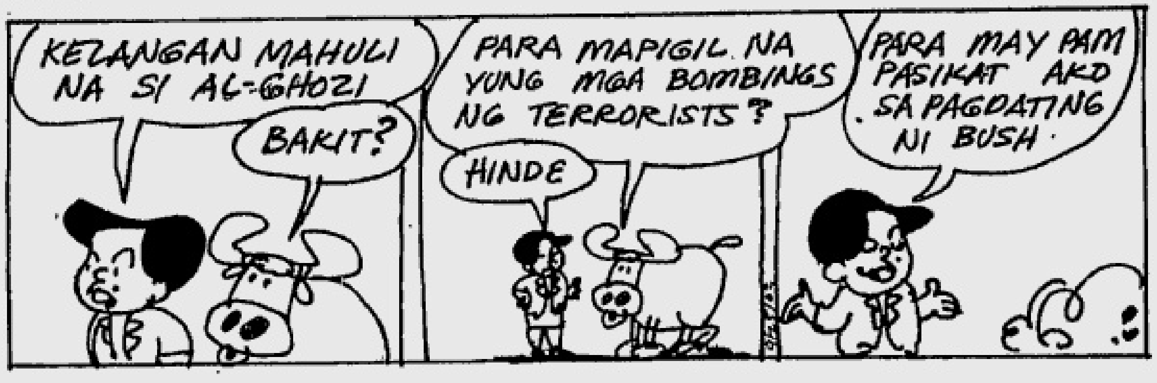
9/25/03

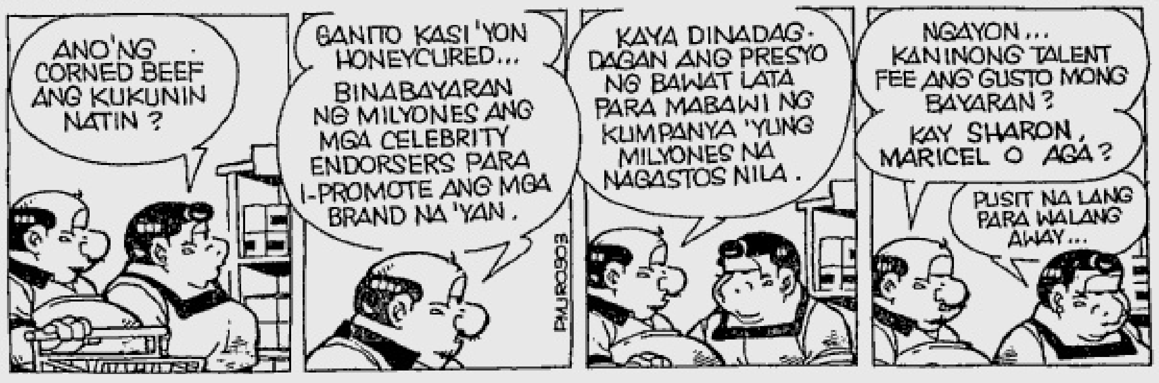
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KELANGAN MAHULI NA SI AL-GHOZI
BAKIT?
PARA MAPIGIL NA YUNG MGA BOMBINGS NG TERRORISTS?
HINDE
PARA MAY PAM PASIKAT AKO SA PAGDATING NI BUSH

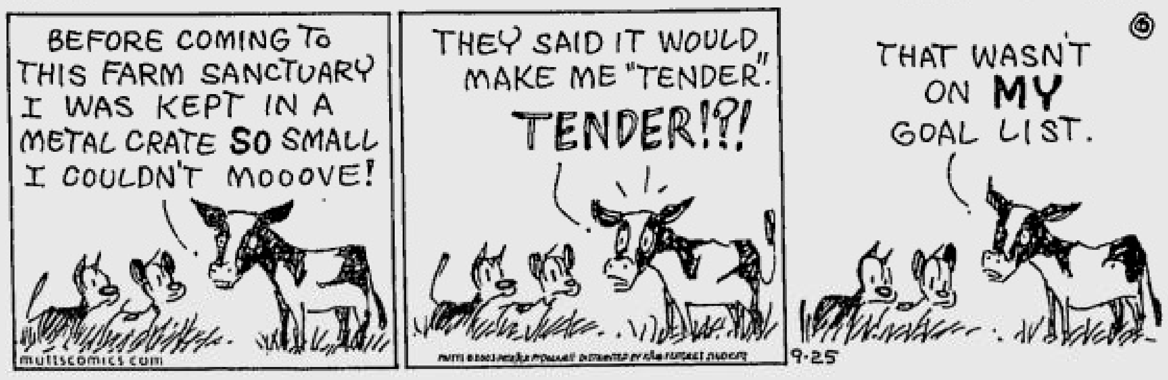
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO'NG CORNED BEEF ANG KUKUNIN NATIN?
GANITO KASI 'YON HONEYCURED...
BINABAYARAN NG MILYONES ANG MGA CELEBRITY ENDORSERS PARA I-PROMOTE ANG MGA BRAND NA 'YAN.
PMJR0903
KAYA DINADAGDAGAN ANG PRESYO NG BAWAT LATA PARA MABAWI NG KUMPANYA 'YUNG MILYONES NA NAGASTOS NILA.
NGAYON... KANINONG TALENT FEE ANG GUSTO MONG BAYARAN?
KAY SHARON, MARICEL O AGA?
PUSIT NA LANG PARA WALANG AWAY...

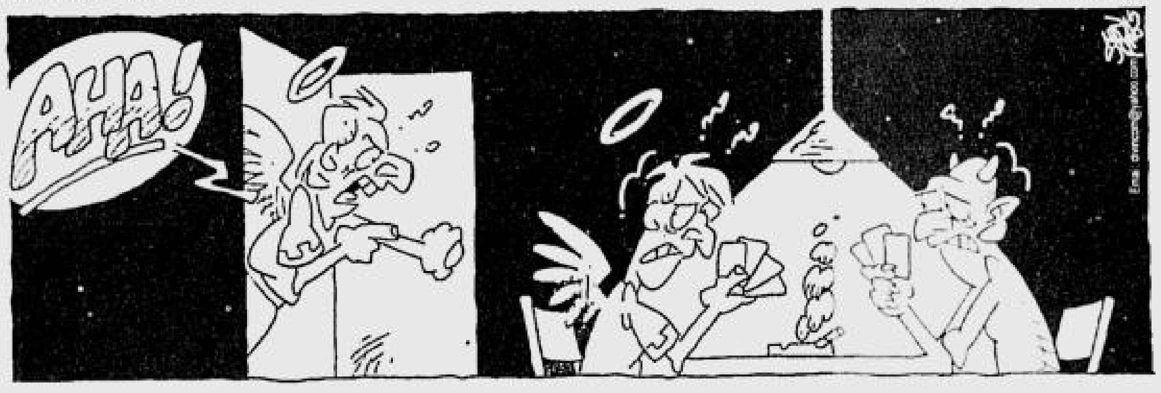
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


BEFORE COMING TO THIS FARM SANCTUARY I WAS KEPT IN A METAL CRATE SO SMALL I COULDN'T MOOOVE!
THEY SAID IT WOULD MAKE ME "TENDER".
TENDER!?!
THAT WASN'T ON MY GOAL LIST.
muttscomics.com
9-25

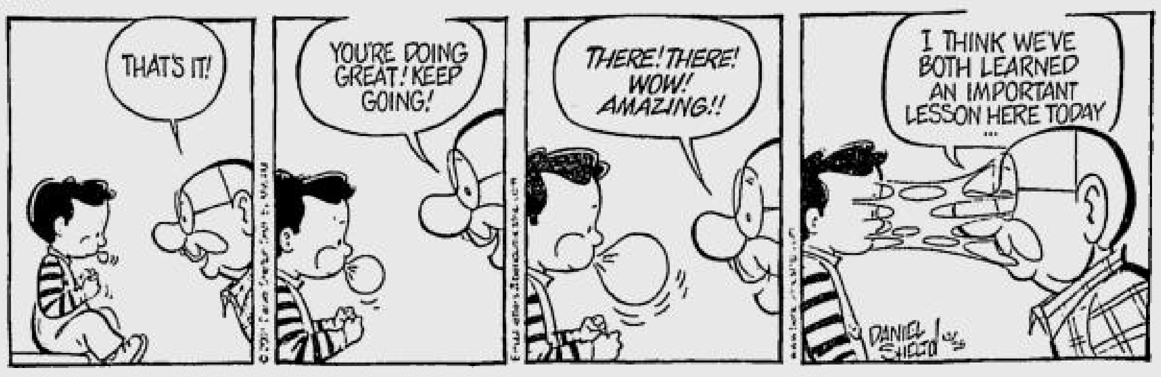
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



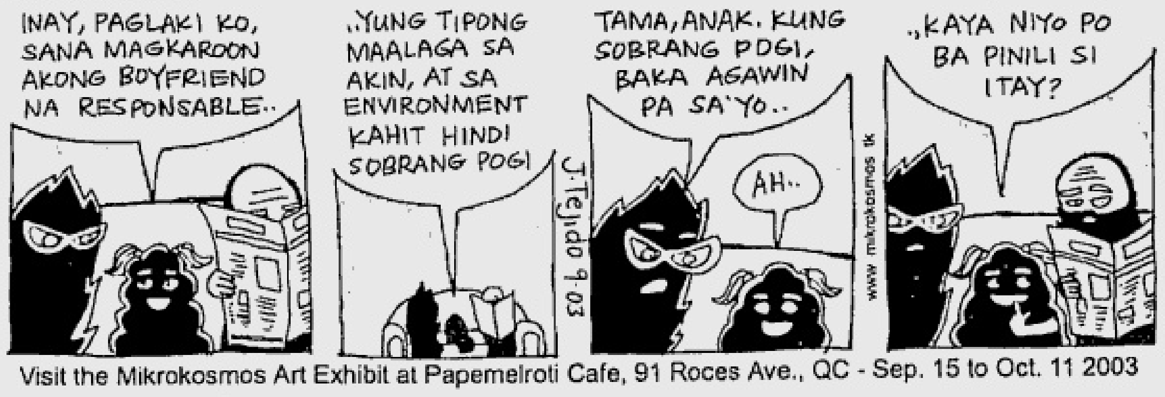
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THAT'S IT!
YOU'RE DOING GREAT! KEEP GOING!
THERE! THERE! WOW! AMAZING!!
I THINK WE'VE BOTH LEARNED AN IMPORTANT LESSON HERE TODAY ...
DANIEL SHELTON

MIKROKOSMOS

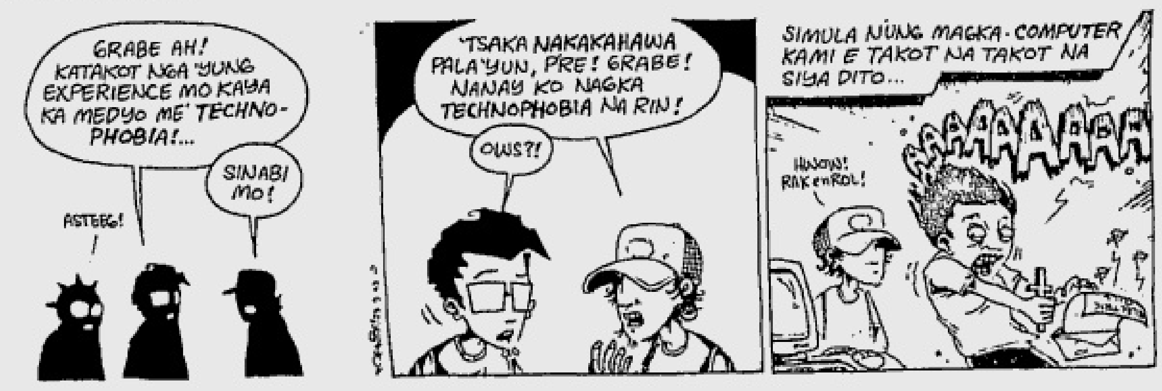
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, PAGLAKI KO, SANA MAGKAROON AKONG BOYFRIEND NA RESPONSABLE..
..YUNG TIPONG MAALAGA SA AKIN, AT SA ENVIRONMENT KAHIT HINDI SOBRANG POGI
J.Tejido 9.03
TAMA, ANAK. KUNG SOBRANG POGI, BAKA AGAWIN PA SA'YO..
AH..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
..KAYA NIYO PO BA PINILI SI ITAY?

Visit the Mikrokosmos Art Exhibit at Papemelroti Cafe, 91 Roces Ave., QC - Sep. 15 to Oct. 11 2003

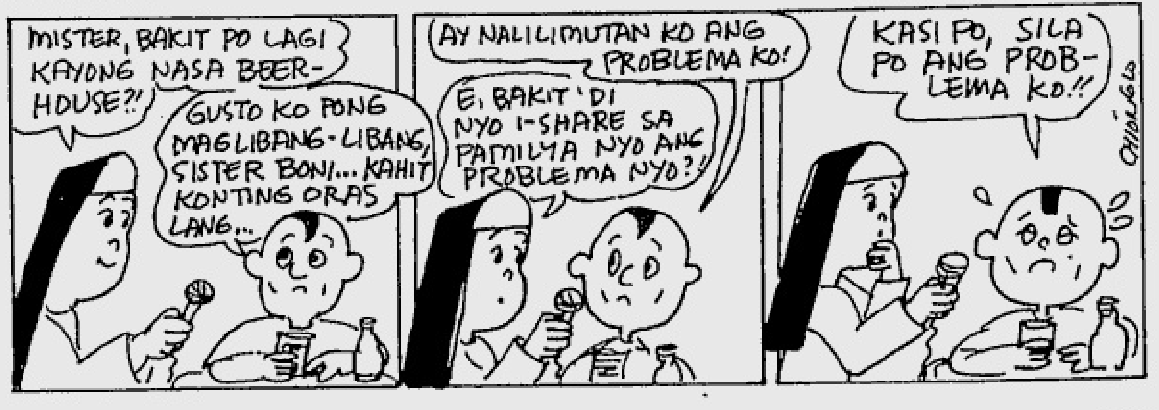
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE AH! KATAKOT NGA 'YUNG EXPERIENCE MO KAYA KA MEDYO ME' TECHNOPHOBIA!...
SINABI MO!
ASTEEG!
'TSAKA NAKAKAHAWA PALA 'YUN, PRE! GRABE! NANAY KO NAGKA TECHNOPHOBIA NA RIN!
OWS?!
SIMULA NUNG MAGKA-COMPUTER KAMI E TAKOT NA TAKOT NA SIYA DITO...
HUWOW! RAKenROL!
AAAAAAARH

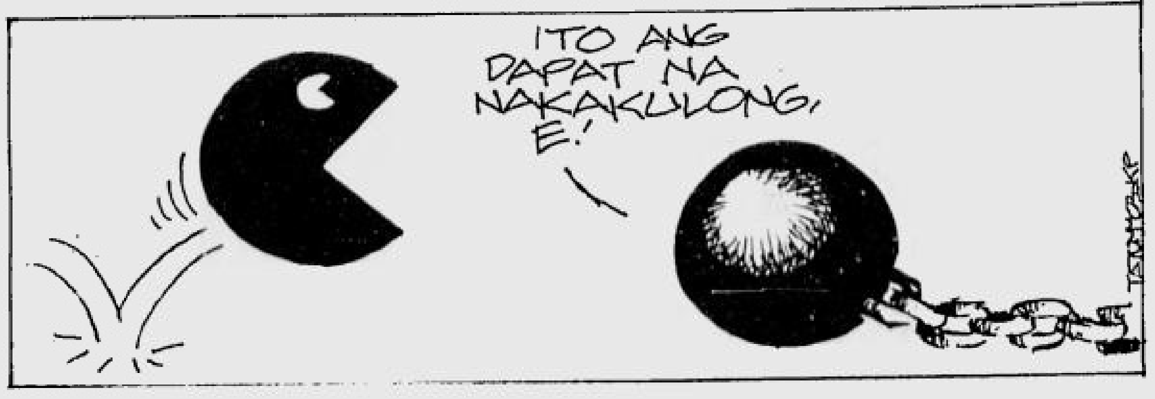
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MISTER, BAKIT PO LAGI KAYONG NASA BEER-HOUSE?!
GUSTO KO PONG MAGLIBANG-LIBANG, SISTER BONI... KAHIT KONTING ORAS LANG...
AY NALILIMUTAN KO ANG PROBLEMA KO!
E, BAKIT 'DI NYO I-SHARE SA PAMILYA NYO ANG PROBLEMA NYO?!
KASI PO, SILA PO ANG PROBLEMA KO!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ITO ANG DAPAT NA NAKAKULONG, E!

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Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design

Aries Esp[illegible], Editor

The Bellevue Hotel: Going the extra mile

GUESTS at Alabang's first full-service business hotel, The Bellevue Hotel, are often surprised to find a golf cart prominently parked out its front lobby. A golf cart in a country club would seem natural, but in a busy business district?

Yes, some of the hotel's top management are golfers, but that's not what the little vehicle is for. The golf cart is a handy means of transport for guests parked far off, especially when the rains come. It is also helpful in conveying Bellevue employees who need to run errands or make deliveries to nearby buildings.

"It is simple things like this that make all the difference. Many guests appreciate the extra effort we put into serving them, and making this golf cart available for their use is just one of the many added services we give," the dutiful General Manager of The Bellevue Hotel, Cyndy Tan-Jarabata, says.

This kind of devotion to service and attention to detail is a trait practiced by every Bellevue employee. This service-oriented culture is deeply ingrained in the hotel's psyche, to fulfill its promise of giving each guest the experience of distinctive hotel living.

The Bellevue Hotel is the newest social and business hub south of Metro Manila committed to service excellence. The "beautiful view," as its name is translated from French, represents only the best that business hotels offer-elegance, efficient service, friendly staff, convenient location, superb food, modern amenities and exciting activities-at affordable prices. The hotel with international standards is nestled inside an information technology zone within the Filinvest Corporate City. Boasting of 222 luxurious deluxe and suite rooms, it also features modern communications and banquet facilities, the latest gym equipment and services, spa treatments, Jacuzzi and infinity pool, bringing to reality the vision of ultimate comfort and convenience. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

> 'It is simple things like this that make all the difference. Many guests appreciate the extra effort we put into serving them'

Where to Stop Where to GO

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

New World Renaissance Hotel
Esperanza St. cor. makati Ave., Makati City
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www.marriott.com

Makati Shangri-La Hotel
Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 813-8888/ Fax 813-5499
www.shangri-la.com

Dusit Hotel Nikko
Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City Phil.
Tel. 867-3333 Email: dusitmnl@dusit.com
http://manila.dusit.com

Barcelo Hotels and Resorts
4/F Adamson Centre, 121 LP Leviste St.
Salcedo Village, Makati
Tel. (02) 867-1159/ fax (02) 867-1185
www.barcelo-asia.com

Mactan Island Resort
Punta Engano Road, Lapu Lapu Cebu
Tel. (632) 231-0288/Fax (632) 231-1688
www.shangri-la.com

Intercontinental Manila
1 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel 815-9711
www.intercontinental.com

The Marco Polo
CM Recto St. Davao City 8000
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www.marcopolohotels.com

Hotel Veniz
No. 1 Abanao St. Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0700/fax (074) 446-0704

Hotel Supreme
113 Magsaysay Ave., Baguio City
Tel. (074) 443-2011 to 18 / Fax. (074) 442-2855

Skyrise Hotel
18 Dominican Road, Baguio City
Tel (074) 445-6834 to 36 /fax (074) 443-3897

The Peninsula Manila Hotel
Cor. Ayala Ave. & Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 810-3456/ Fax 815-4825

Mandarin Oriental Manila
Paseo de Roxas cor. Makati Ave. Makati City
Tel. 750-8888
www.mandarin-oriental.com

The Bellevue Manila
North Bridgeway, Northgate
Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tel. (632) 771-8181/ fax (632) 771-8282
www.thebellevue.com.ph

Waterfront Hotel Lahug
1 Salinas Drive, Lahug Cebu City
Tel. (6332) 232-6888/Fax (6332)232-6880
www.waterfronthotels.net

Waterfront Hotel Mactan
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Tel. (074) 446-0231 to 50

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Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93/ (074) 447-8895 to 98
Fax. (074) 447-0494

Golden Pine Hotel and Restaurant
Intersection of Carino St. and Legarda Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074)444-9965 to 72/740-8975/
Fax. (074) 446-0704

Taal Vista Hotel
Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City
Tel. (046) 413-1000/fax. (046) 413-1225

For Feedback and inquiries, call
899-4426 or 897-8808 loc 209

Romantic interludes at Puerto Princesa

PUERTO Princesa, Palawan is considered as one of the most exciting places to visit. Visitors often go home enthralled with vivid memories of its natural beauty, exotic landscapes and endless adventure offerings. The province, however, go beyond explorations, diving, island hoping or simply basking in one of its white sand beaches. It offers, rather, special experiences of enduring value as complemented by Barceló Asturias Hotel.

Whether your are celebrating a special occasion or just spending time with your loved one, Barceló Asturias Hotel will set the mood for romance and an experience you will never forget, through the hotel's fabulous "Romance Package." This unique offer includes roundtrip airport transfers, overnight accommodation, breakfast in bed for two (2) persons, a bottle of sparkling wine, welcome amenities of chocolates and complimentary use of the swimming pool and Jacuzzi. Adding to the romance, a specially prepared candle light dinner for two (2) will also be offered. This limited offer is priced at only P3,000 net per package and is valid until Dec. 15.

The "Romance Package" was designed to complement the hotel's Castilian motif ideal for a romantic interlude in a subdued yet elegant setting. Styled like a Mediterranean villa, Barcelo Asturias Hotel is the choice hotel to experience Puerto Princesa to its fullest. It has sixty (60) tastefully furnished rooms that line two floors, a swimming pool and Jacuzzi set amidst a tropical garden and Food & Beverage outlets that bring dining standards to new and better heights- The Pescados Restaurant features delicious Filipino and International cuisine with seafood specialties. The Coffee Exchange is a relaxing venue for a rendezvous amidst an elegant and comfortable lounge setting. And the Scenario Music Bar that has a billiards table and serves light snacks and cocktails which is ideal for unwinding and entertaining friends.

Barceló Asturias Hotel invites you to explore Puerto Princesa and rediscover one's zest for romance through the hotel's "Romance Package." For inquiries and reservations, call their Manila Sales Office at Tel. No.: (632) 894-4656 and 867-1159. You must visit their website at www.barcelo-asia.com.

Astoria Plaza launches 'A whole new you' lifestyle package

ASTORIA Plaza is introducing a new concept in beauty and luxurious living in its recent tie-up with sought-after cosmetic surgeon Dr. Joel Nicdao, M.D. F.P.C.S An accomplished cosmetic surgeon, Dr. Nicdao's credentials and track record are very impressive ---- being among others, a Member of the American Academy of Aesthetic and Restorative Surgery, an Associate Member of the Philippine College of Cosmetic Surgeons and a fellow of the Philippine College of Surgeons. He is also a member of the Botox Advisory Panel for the Asia - Pacific Region. Dr. Nicdao's expert services range a simple Botox wrinkle removal to the more exquisite and savvy liposuction process.

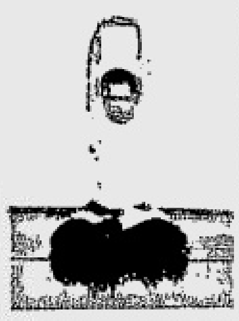
After a painless cosmetic surgery under Dr. Nicdao, the recuperation process normally takes from 3-5 days and during this gestation period, a patient is required to be fully relaxed and comfortable in a stress-free environment. Availing of Astoria Plaza's Lifestyle package makes this an ideal treat for its guests. Like a totally transformed butterfly in a cocoon, check - in Astoria Plaza and check-out totally renewed and rejuvenated to the delight of your friends and loved ones.

Adding to the total comfort, convenience and personalized service of this ideal package is that Dr. Nicdao's clinic is located just at the ground floor of Astoria Plaza. Thus, you are assured of complete medical attention and monitoring round - the - clock while you relax and recharge in style.

Astoria Plaza's totally unique and innovative "Whole New You! Lifestyle Package" is open to men and women who want to look their best and enjoy the best of life. "Whole New You!" offers superb room accommodations in a two-bedroom suite inclusive of daily room service breakfast, welcome fruits, bottled mineral water replenished daily, complimentary use of the swimming pool and the gym plus 10 percent discount on services at the Stressscape Spa Center. Astoria's Lifestyle Package range from an overnight to a 3 to 5 night stay depending on your aesthetic requests.

The Astoria Plaza is conveniently located at 15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City. It is in close proximity to the Makati central business district and is within a short distance to top business addresses, academic institutions, shopping malls, entertainment facilities and sports facilities. The Astoria Plaza is managed with distinction by Genesis Hotels & Resorts. For inquiries and reservations please visit or call telephone number (02) 687-1111. (30)

Mandarin Oriental relaunches yoga meditation and back-pain therapy



HEEDING popular demand, Mandarin Oriental's Pure Yoga studio re-launches in October two of its special programs -- basic meditation and back pain therapy, under the direction of Prakash Singh Bisht, the hotel's resident yoga instructor who hails from Rishikesh, India.

From Oct. 1 to 14, Prakash takes the lead on a journey towards self-discovery and contentment via six consecutive one-hour sessions on basic meditation. According to Prakash, who studied yoga and its allied disciplines at the reputable Kaivalyadhama G.S. College of Yoga and Cultural Synthesis, meditation is known to cure stress-related ailments such as insomnia, diabetes and digestive disorders as a consequence of its capacity to reduce stress, manage anger, and alter negative thoughts. It is one of the world's oldest disciplines geared towards achieving physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Another popular program, which focuses on back pain relief, will be conducted from Oct. 15 to 28. Apart from those who are already suffering from severe or chronic back pain, Pure Yoga's therapeutic classes for back pain are especially recommended for people whose lifestyles are sedentary for the most part. Company executives who are perennially desk-bound while exercising their functions fall into this category.

Both programs, offered at P2,000 each, consist of six one-hour sessions spread out over a two-week period. Enrollees may choose from either a morning class from

9 a.m. to 10 a.m., or an evening class from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday; or alternatively, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday with the same time slots. Each session will accept a minimum of three students and a maximum of 12 at the Mandarin Oriental's Pure Yoga studio on the 18th floor. Pre-enrollment and admission is on a first come first serve basis. For more information, please call 750 8888 extension 2105.

People, Events & Products

Seaboard-Eastern launches Todo-Serbisyo campaign

SEABOARD-Eastern Insurance Co. Inc., one of the major non-life insurers in the country has just launched its "Todo-Serbisyo" campaign. In the launching ceremonies held at the ground floor of the Seaboard Centre, Esteban St. Legaspi Village, Makati City, its chair Jose Halili Co emphasized to the employees that "Todo-Serbisyo is not just another byword but a commitment to give a full and the best service to the various publics that the company deals with." Co urged the employees to live up to this commitment. As part of the launching, Todo-Serbisyo stickers were given out to vehicle owners.

As the first phase of its campaign, the company has provided a 24-hour roadside assistance with free benefits to its motor car clients in Metro Manila and major cities in the country to ensure that they enjoy a wide array of services when they get into an accident or experience sudden breakdown of their vehicles. At the same time, the company has put up its Motor Claims Inspection Center right behind the Seaboard Centre on Bolanos St. to provide its clients a quick and efficient inspection and claim settlement of any major minor damage sustained by an insured vehicle.

Other activities are being lined up for the Todo-Serbisyo campaign to ensure that the clients and intermediaries are provided a full scale of services that are distinctly Seaboard-Eastern's.

Evoke style and functionality with Leone

ALLIES of storytellers, Leone Gelball Pens and Leone Click Gel Pens are writing instruments that evokes style and functionality. These pens come in eye-catching colors with choices of cap or retractable forms. It is presented in a transparent barrel with rubber grip for writers to better handle their pens in expressing their thoughts.

Transform inspiration into overwhelming narratives with Leone Fruit Gel metallic, glittered gel pens. Available in eight fruity scents and colors, Leone Fruit Gel metallic lets writing take on extraordinary feel.

When faced with fickle moments of coining the climax, worry not because you can turn to Leone Erase-a-ball pen. This ballpoint pen comes with an eraser and is available in black or blue indeed, a great storyteller will enjoy the task of story writing with Leone Pens. It's one dependable tip in writing an engaging masterpiece.

Leone pens are locally distributed by Star Corp. and are available in National Book Store and NBS Book Express outlets, SM Department Stores, Goodwill Bookstores, Pandayan Bookshop, Gaisano, NCCC (Tagum and Davao), Lopues, Bohol Quality, Bazaar Mariano Lim, Laser Marketing, Lucky Educational Supply, Master Square, City Supermarkets, Fit Mart, Marbel Ace Commercial and other leading stores nationwide.

Luke Mejares…

From page A25

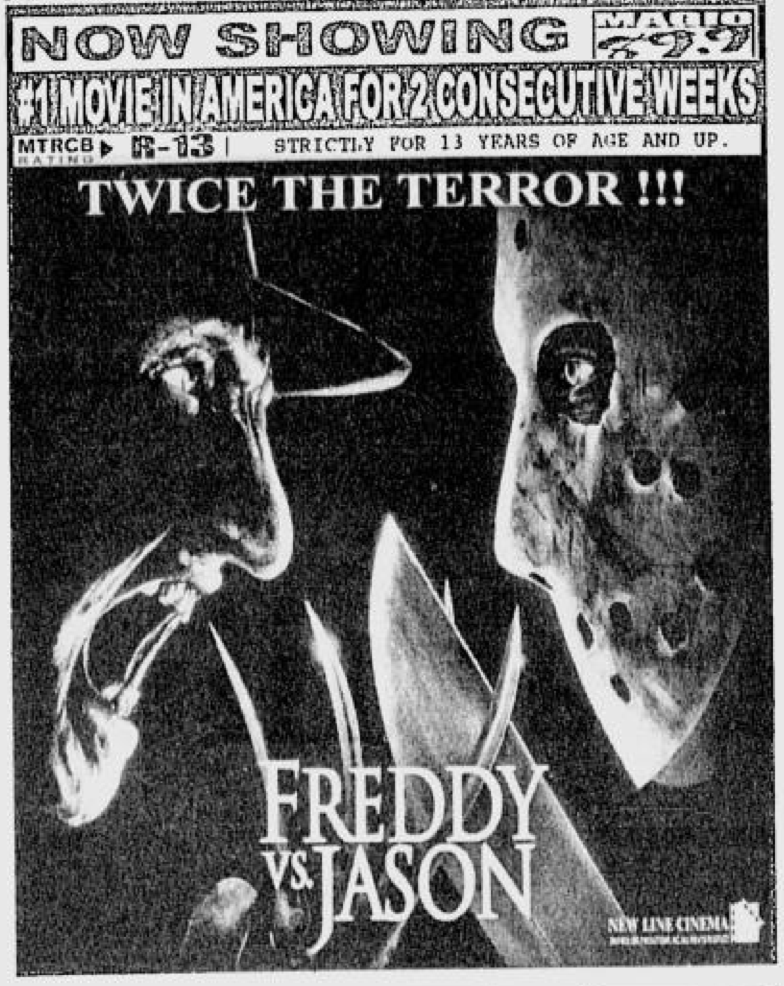
Profuse thanks to acoustic wiz **Paolo Santos** for gamely jamming with True Faith during my birthday bash. I wish I could have frozen that moment when they were serenading me.

Belated happy birthday to my "partner in crime" **Anna Jimenez.** We click so well that I sometimes forget you're my *tita*!

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

DID YOU KNOW...

CAMILLE Prats and rumored boyfriend **Francis Ricafort**, younger brother of **LJ Moreno**, were seen together at the Megamall Saturday afternoon, just a day after Camille declared in a press conference that she wouldn't have a boyfriend yet.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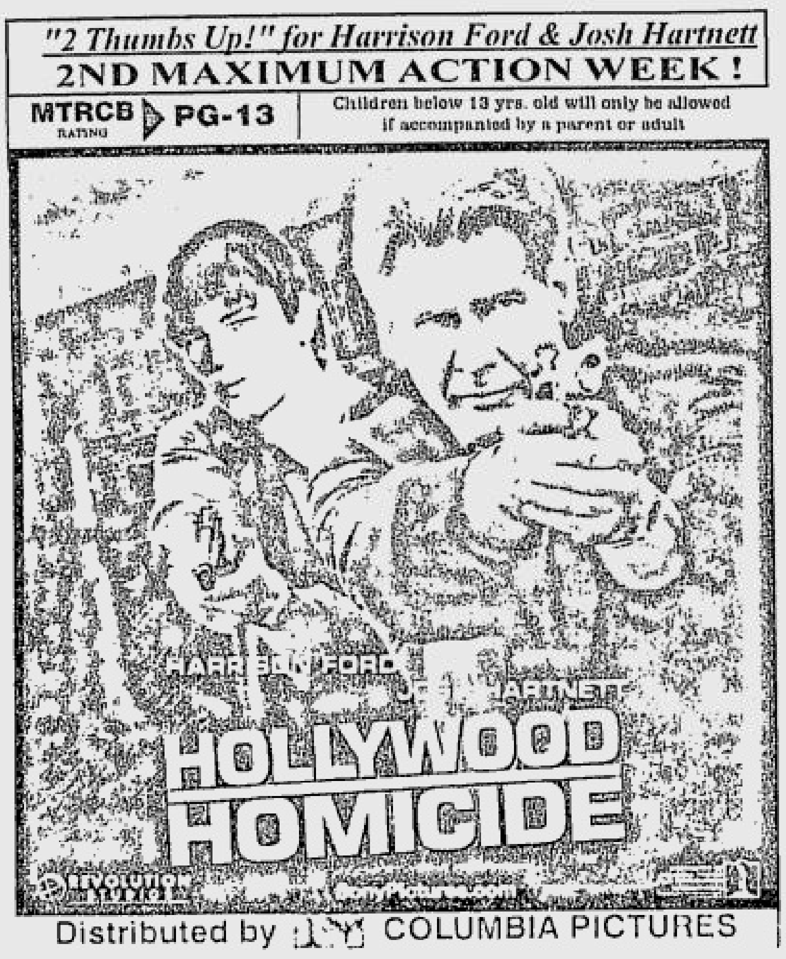
"2 Thumbs Up!" for Harrison Ford & Josh Hartnett
2ND MAXIMUM ACTION WEEK !
MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
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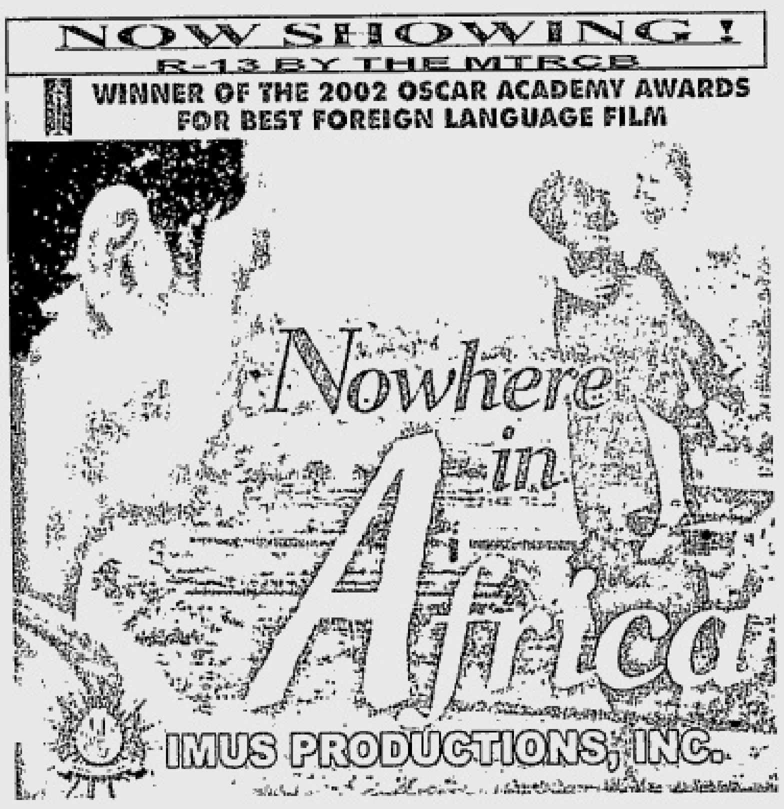
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ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
11:05, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
R18

CINEMA 2
KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00
GP

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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
Ali 2	1ST TIME
Ali 3	THE MEDALLION
Ali 4	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
Ali 5	FREDDY VS. JASON
Ali 6	BASIC
Ali 7	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

ARANETA COLISEUM

SEPT 24	UAAP WOMEN / JRS. FINALS
SEPT 25	UAAP: FEU VS. UE / ADMU VS. DLSU
SEPT 26	JUST ONCE...GREATEST HITS REPEAT
SEPT 27	UAAP: FEU VS. UE / ADMU VS. DLSU
SEPT 28	PBA · FED EX VS. ALASKA

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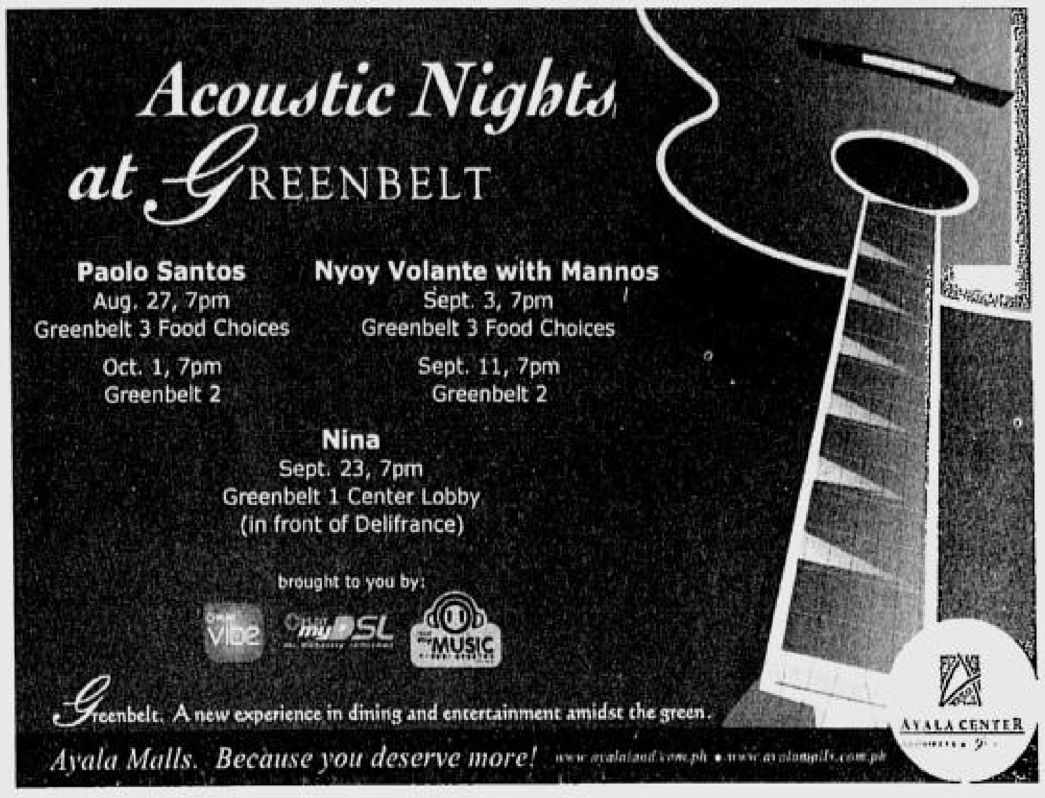
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAN
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL S.
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATA
CORONET A	LIGAYA KATUMBAS AY BUHAY
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTI
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
B	LIGAYA KATUMBAS AY BUHAY
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA!
CINEMA-2	LIGAYA KATUMBAS ANG BUHAY
CINEMA-3	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BASIC
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	FIRST TIME
CINEMA-6	2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
CINEMA-7	KALABIT
CINEMA-8	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JASON VS FREDDY
CINEMA-12	MEDALLION
CINEMA-14	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-15	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAN
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
CINEMA-1	SWAT
CINEMA-2	MEDALLION
CINEMA-4	LEGALLY BL
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA


Acoustic Nights at Greenbelt

Paolo Santos
Aug. 27, 7pm
Greenbelt 3 Food Choices
Oct. 1, 7pm
Greenbelt 2

Nyoy Volante with Mannos
Sept. 3, 7pm
Greenbelt 3 Food Choices
Sept. 11, 7pm
Greenbelt 2

Nina
Sept. 23, 7pm
Greenbelt 1 Center Lobby
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LO CHI-LEUNG

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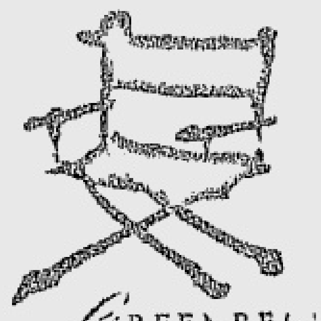
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ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Action heroes with sidelines

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"HOLLYWOOD Homicide" initially gives the impression that it's pretty much going to be a standard cops-and-robbers yarn, ho-hum. Happily, it soon turns out to be something much better.

Its plot isn't all that arresting: Detectives played by **Harrison Ford** and **Josh Hartnett** have a hard time cracking a murder case involving a rap group. Eventually, they catch the mastermind, who is very well connected to both the music world and the police department.

So far, so terse. But director **Ron Shelton** adds so many interesting and even ornery elements that the movie transcends its slim plot line and becomes a fascinating viewing treat.

The lead characters are given "sidelines" aside from their jobs as cops: Ford sells homes on the side, while Hartnett is even more versatile—he teaches yoga class, is a stage actor, etc. Action heroes with sidelines—that's a switch!

Supporting characters add even more texture to the production. Ford's girlfriend is a fortune teller and psychic. The mastermind is helped and protected by rogue cops, one of whom killed Hartnett's father decades ago.

Even the use of Hollywood in the movie goes against standard practice: This production isn't interested in its hype and glitter, but in its dingy underbelly.

The sequence that sums up the movie's attitude regarding the entertainment capital of the world is the one in which Ford and Hartnett chase suspects smack into a festive event involving some luminaries, and turn it into a big mess.

But this is not to say that the film doesn't serve up the regulation armed confrontations and exciting car chases that are expected of big actioners like this.

The visual action reaches its literal high point when Ford and his prey climb all the way up to the roofs of skyscrapers—a whiz-bang finale that is covered by a number of police and TV helicopters that take the action right into people's homes.

The fact that this is taking place in Hollywood enables the movie to make the ironic observation that "life" is more exciting than any cops-and-robbers yarn that the world's TV-film capital can conjure.

But the movie also sets a chase scene in a duck pond, of all places. The action is messy and smelly instead of thrilling—and there's the production's ornery streak in full display again.

The effect of all these textured characterizations and details is the rejuvenation of a tired film format, and moviegoers are the better for it.

'Just Once More'

POP music legends **Rico J. Puno, Rey Valera, Nonoy Zuñiga, Hajji Alejandro** and **Marco Sison** reprise their recent hit concert on Friday, Sept. 26 at Araneta Coliseum. Their latest stellar collaboration is titled "Greatest Hits: Just Once More." Call 687-5853.

Aside from singing hit songs, the veteran singers will be showcasing the performing talents of their children on the show: Hajji's Rachel, Rico's Tosca, and Rey's John Valor (keyboards), Joan Valerie (guitar), Greta Mae (drums) and Clarisse (keyboards).

'ShowReal Asia'

FOR some weeks now, the National Geographic Channel has been plugging its "ShowReal Asia" series of films by Asians. Now comes word that NGC International and the Singapore Economic Development Board have agreed to provide up to $10 million in production funding for Singapore-based and Asian production companies and documentary filmmakers to produce the next season's episodes for the new documentary program.

A total of 12 one-hour documentaries will be commissioned. The documentary program is looking for compelling stories with strong characters, great storytelling, breathtaking and engaging visuals, cutting-edge topics and treatments, and a sense of adventure.

Traditional documentary approaches and art-house filmmaking won't be entertained, so prospective entrants should dare to reinvent the documentary genre, crafting their own visual and narrative vision.

Nine of the 12 projects will go to Singapore-based companies. Deadline for submission of proposals is Oct. 3. For details, log in to www.ngcasia.com/showrealasia/.

Shortlisted candidates will be required to attend a "pitching" (verbal selling) session in Singapore from Nov. 10 to 12.

Luke Mejares: I'm secure in my manhood

LUKE Mejares just laughed off rumors insinuating that he's gay.'

Luke is so good-natured he lets nothing get to him. It just so happens that his sentences are peppered with gay lingo, so if you overhear him talking and you don't know him that well, you might conclude that he's gay.

Said Luke: "I'm secure in my manhood so why should I be affected by such talk? I'm not homophobic, though. I have nothing against gays. It's just like singing. To each his own. We all have our different styles and preferences."

The mere fact that he has no qualms about using swardspeak, with matching facial contortions and hand gestures, goes to show that he's got no hang-ups at all. Luke's attitude is as cool as his music.

LUKE/ A24

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

50 godparents

DINGDONG **Avanzado** was the picture of an ideal father when he dropped off the invitation to the baptism of his and **Jessa**'s baby, **Janelle Amanda** or **Jayda** for short.

Some of Jayda's godparents are **Ara Mina, Marissa Sanchez, Nora Aunor, Carol Banawa, Regine Velasquez, Martin Nievera, Ogie Alcasid, Sec. Mike Defensor**, to name a few. Twenty-five pairs all in all.

"I'm rushing to the hospital because Jessa just called and said that she had to rush our baby to the hospital," he sighed. "I'm really worried."

It turned out to be a case of milk indigestion, so their little princess is all set to be welcomed into this mad yet wonderful world on Sunday.

Dominic's vow

DOMINIC Ochoa is bewildered why some people keep saying that he does not want to marry his girlfriend of two years, Janna Victoria.

"It's funny," said Dominic. "All I said is that Janna and I are not ready yet because we still have a lot of things to establish like her soap business and my food-stand biz, and they twist the story saying I'm not serious with her. Two years is quite a long time and I see myself settling down with her in due time, but not now. I want to be financially stable before I take the plunge."

Seeing how committed Dominic and Janna are to each other, I must say that they won't be walking out on each other. They will surely walk down the aisle when time prods them to do so.

Greg's accident

IS GREG **Martin** of P4 feeling high and mighty?

Greg reportedly sideswiped a car and just drove away. He refused to budge when he was apprehended. The sideswiped car turned out to be the car of Manila Bulletin's indefatigable **Tita Crispina Belen**, but knowing how kind Tita Cris is, she didn't make a big fuss out of it. Maybe Greg got away with it this time, but if he does not control his arrogance he might meet his match soon. He should not let Power 4's fame get to his head or he could suffer from a major power failure before he knows it.

Little Monsours

MONSOUR del Rosario is excited about the plan of a popular health drink to use the tag line "The future Monsour" when it launches its new ad featuring kids who excel in various sports. Mon's junior counterpart will come out in the Tae kwon do segment.

If there's one thing Monsour truly enjoys, it is teaching kids in his OTTC gym and moulding them into future Olympians.

What about a little Monsour? He laughed "I'll get to that. Little ones, and plenty at that, but only with one woman!"

Vingo wannabe

EVEN if I'm not really into jukebox music, I have always been amazed by the phenomenal rise of the April Boys. Theirs is a rags-to-riches story. They really grew up in a home-along-the-*riles* way before Dolphy's comedy show hit the TV screens. Their charisma with the *masa* is undeniable.

Got to chat with **Vingo Regino**, and his unassuming, down-to-earth ways made me feel instantly at home. He wants to appeal to the public to beware of a con artist who has been pretending to be him. The impostor has duped many people by asking them for down payment for a concert and then suddenly doing a disappearing act. He dresses up like Vingo and even imitates his voice.

"I worked so hard to get to where I am now," said Vingo. "It's just so sad that a stranger is out to ruin my name."

What if he bumps into the fake Vingo? "I'll teach him how to be a man. *Magbanat siya ng buto at huwag manloko ng ibang tao.* But I'll forgive him. *Kung ang kapatid ko nga na si* April Boy, *napatawad ko* and peace *na kami ngayon, siya pa kaya? Walang masamang tinapay sa akin.*"

His humble beginnings have surely served him well. Humility is one trait that has never left Vingo.

Had a *tête-à-tête* with my fun buddy **Jun Lalin**, who's fresh from Turkey and L.A. where he visited his fave ward **Ruffa Guttierrez**. He can attest to how blissfully happy Ruffa and **Ylmaz** are. The couple will be coming home with their baby girl in December and will have the baby christened here. The reason why no pictures of the baby have been printed in the papers yet is that Ruffa and Ylmaz believe that it's better to expose their baby after she's baptized.

Their wedding was such a star-studded grand affair, so you can just imagine what the couple is cooking up for their *unica hija*'s baptism.

Personal

MERCI beaucoup to the staff of Child's Play photography studio (2/F Ash Creek Center, Ortigas), especially to **Lala, Peaches, Renato** and **Paul** for my new column pic. It's a new look as I start a brand new year in my *la vida loca*, having a pictorial at C.P. really makes you feel like a kid again.

POWER PLANT
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PEOPLE I KNOW R18 11:30, 1:30, 3:40 5:50, 8:00, 10:10	NOWHERE IN AFRICA R13 12:20, 3:20, 6:20, 9:20	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE PG13 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

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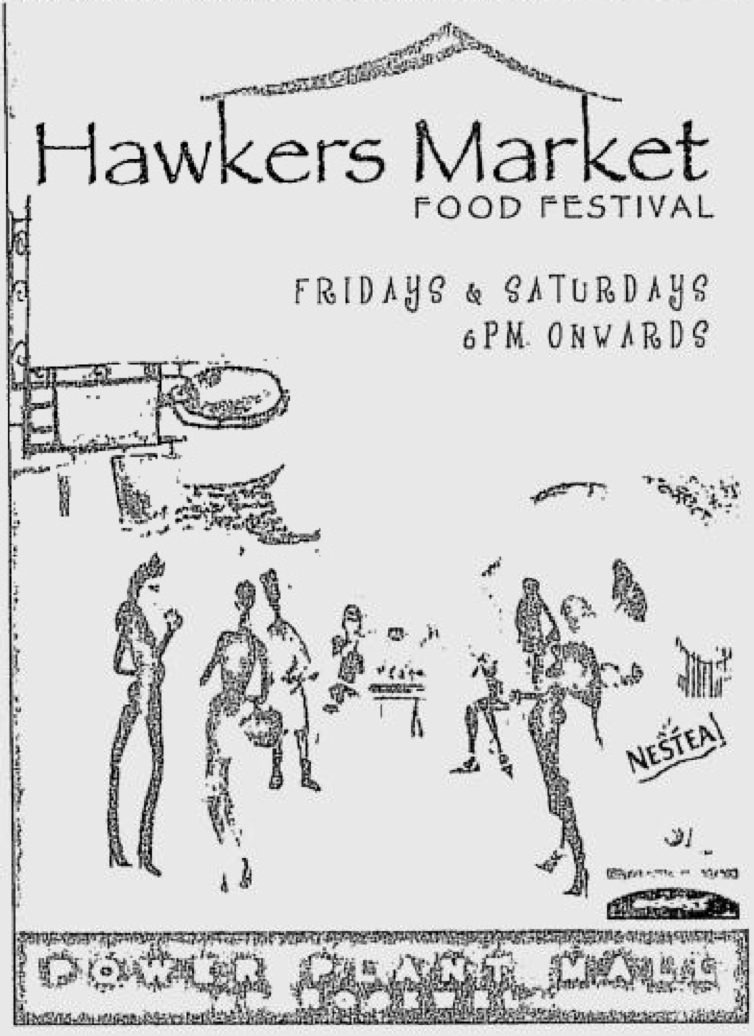

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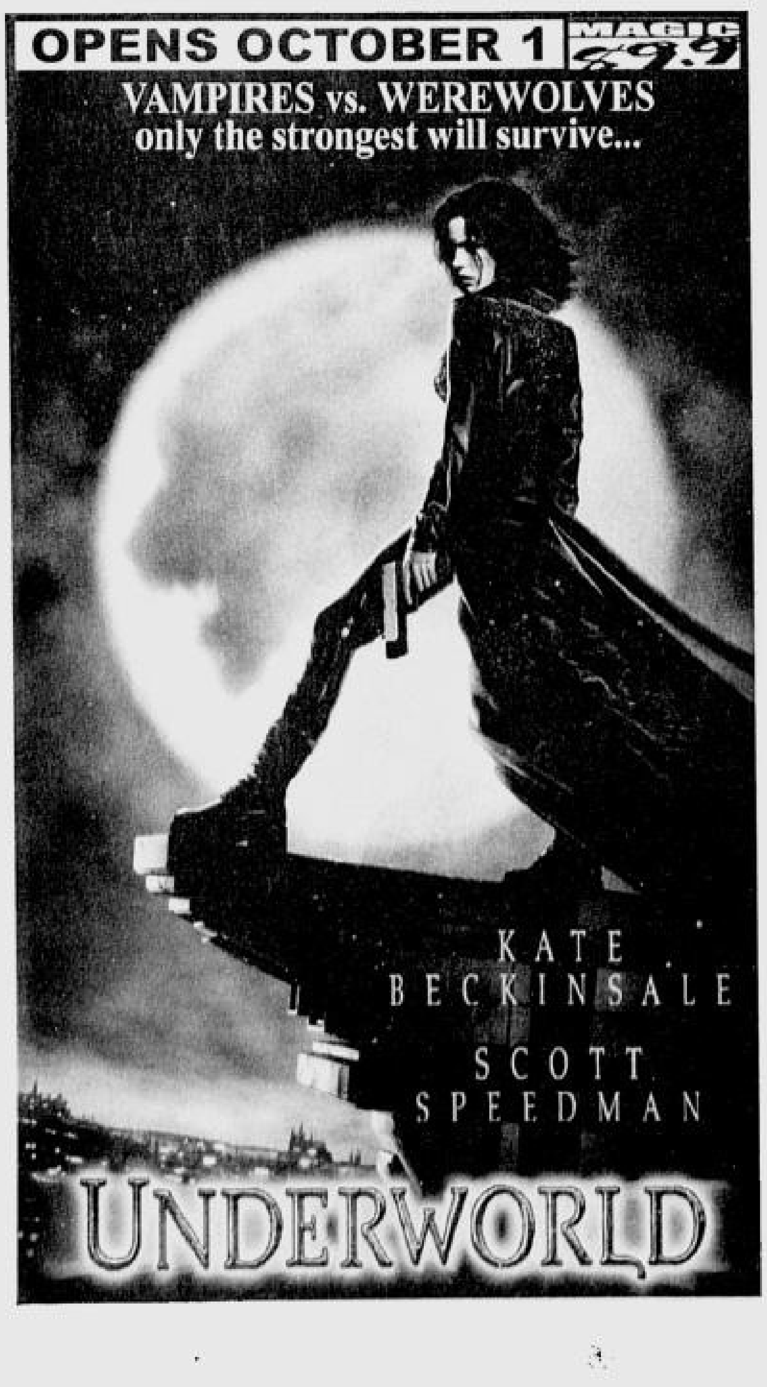

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RFM Foundation honors the Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines 2003

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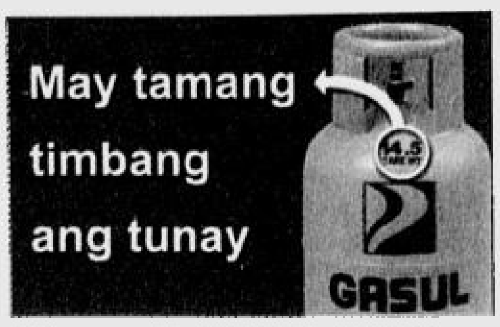
May tamang
timbang
ang tunay
GASUL

Gov't eyes 'Mindanao Fund for Peace'

By Elena R. Torrijos

DUBAI, UAE—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday requested the World Bank for support and assistance in establishing a multi-donor trust fund for Mindanao.

"The trust fund would serve as a peace dividend to the ongoing negotiations between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the government panel and could help ensure a coordinated program for post-conflict assistance in Mindanao," the President said in a letter handed over by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho to World Bank president James Wolfensohn.

At the annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund here, Camacho and presidential assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza also held bilateral meetings with government representatives of the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Bahrain. Together with Japan and Australia, these countries have expressed their support for the trust fund.

In an interview, Camacho explained that the multi-donor trust fund, consisting of grants rather than loans, would support projects in Mindanao and the money would be ready for release once the government and the MILF sign a peace agreement.

"If peace is achieved, we want them to take the lead and manage the trust fund," Camacho said.

Dureza said that the United States affirmed its commitment to provide $30 million to the Philippines once the peace agreement has been signed.

Mindanao's development has lagged behind that of Luzon and the Visayas given the conflict between the government and Muslim separatist groups, worsening the poverty situation on the island.

In her letter, Ms Macapagal thanked Wolfensohn for the World Bank's $33.6-million ARMM social fund loan and $100-million Kalahi project loan that were both approved last year.

"However, there is still much to be done in Mindanao, especially in rebuilding the economic, political and social environment. The post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction program will require massive assistance," the President said.

Camacho was instructed by the President to work with Wolfensohn to discuss the trust fund.

Meanwhile, in a speech yesterday at the joint annual discussion of the boards of governors of the World Bank and IMF, Camacho stressed the need for creative and less fiscally burdensome financial assistance to be packaged for middle income countries so that governments could more effectively use the facilities.

He deplored the World Bank's and the IMF's "credit-rating mentality" which constantly highlights the negatives of economies.

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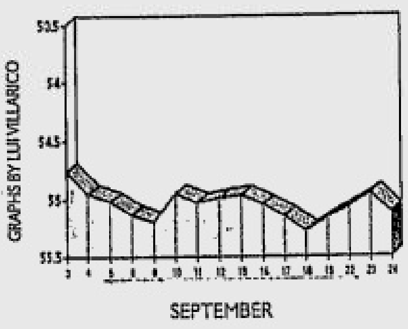

GRAPHS BY LUI VILLARICO

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 55.12 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 24, 2003

Y 111.81 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Sept. 24, 2003

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STOCK MARKET

Shares end higher

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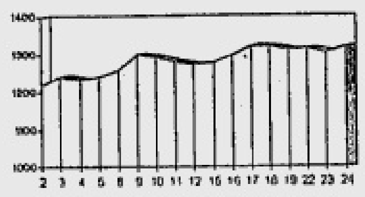
SEPTEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES closed higher yesterday, rebounding from a weak opening as investors accumulated select stocks displaying strong growth, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 15.56 points, or 1.2 percent, at 1318.57, following Tuesday's 0.8-percent loss.

AB Capital Securities economist Jose Vistan said with the lull in fresh developments on the economic and political fronts, investors took the opportunity to focus on select stocks.

"Individual companies with some stories to tell were the ones moving," he told Dow Jones Newswires. "It also helped that Wall Street rebounded after a steep decline, which provided relief to investors who feared its earlier drop signified the start of a correction."

On Tuesday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.4 percent, while the Nasdaq Composite Index gained 1.5 percent.

Vistan said among the stocks on the rise was SM Prime, which closed up 20 centavos, or 3.2 percent, at P6.40, because of the consistent growth displayed by its successful mall operations.

Investors also favored Philippine Long Distance Telephone, which rose P5, or 0.8 percent, to P650, and Globe Telecom, up P15, or 2.2 percent, at P685, due to their positive growth outlooks.

Manila Electric Co. "B" was up 50 centavos, or 2.1 percent, at P24.75 on expectations the country's largest power distributor would be allowed to raise power rates to help cover customer refunds for excess

SHARES/ B2

Gov't sees inflow of $500M in low-interest loans in '04

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is expecting $500 million worth of program loans from multilateral lenders to come in next year to bankroll projects related to the strengthening of public finance, streamlining of the bureaucracy and the development of capital markets.

The inflow from multilateral loans should reduce the government's $1.8-billion foreign financing requirement for 2004.

Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong said the Philippines was seeking a $200-million loan from the World Bank for civil service reforms. A pending $200-million loan also from the World Bank to strengthen public finance is expected to be signed by year's end.

Despite rosy prospects for multilateral lending in 2004, Camacho said the government chose to be conservative and budgeted no program and project loans in next year's external financing requirement as the outcome of these types of loans were becoming increasingly harder to predict.

She said the $200-million public finance strengthening loan scheduled this year would likely be disbursed by year's end and could be booked for 2004.

The finance official added that the Asian Development Bank would release a $150-million loan for non-bank financial sector reforms in two installments. The first $75 million should come in next month while the other half would be disbursed next year.

For 2003, the government had estimated that program and project loans would reach about $1.2 billion on top of the $1.9 billion in commercial borrowings that had to be raised.

The actual contribution of multilateral loans to external financing this year was lower than the estimate after several transactions failed to materialize. For instance, the $200-million World Bank loan was programmed for

GOV'T/ B3

Debt yields fall on strong liquidity

BID yields on government debt fell yesterday, pushed down by a surge in market liquidity, traders said.

"This week there is around P10.3 to P11 billion worth of paper maturing compared to just P3 billion worth of two-year bonds offered by the Treasury," a trader at a local commercial bank said.

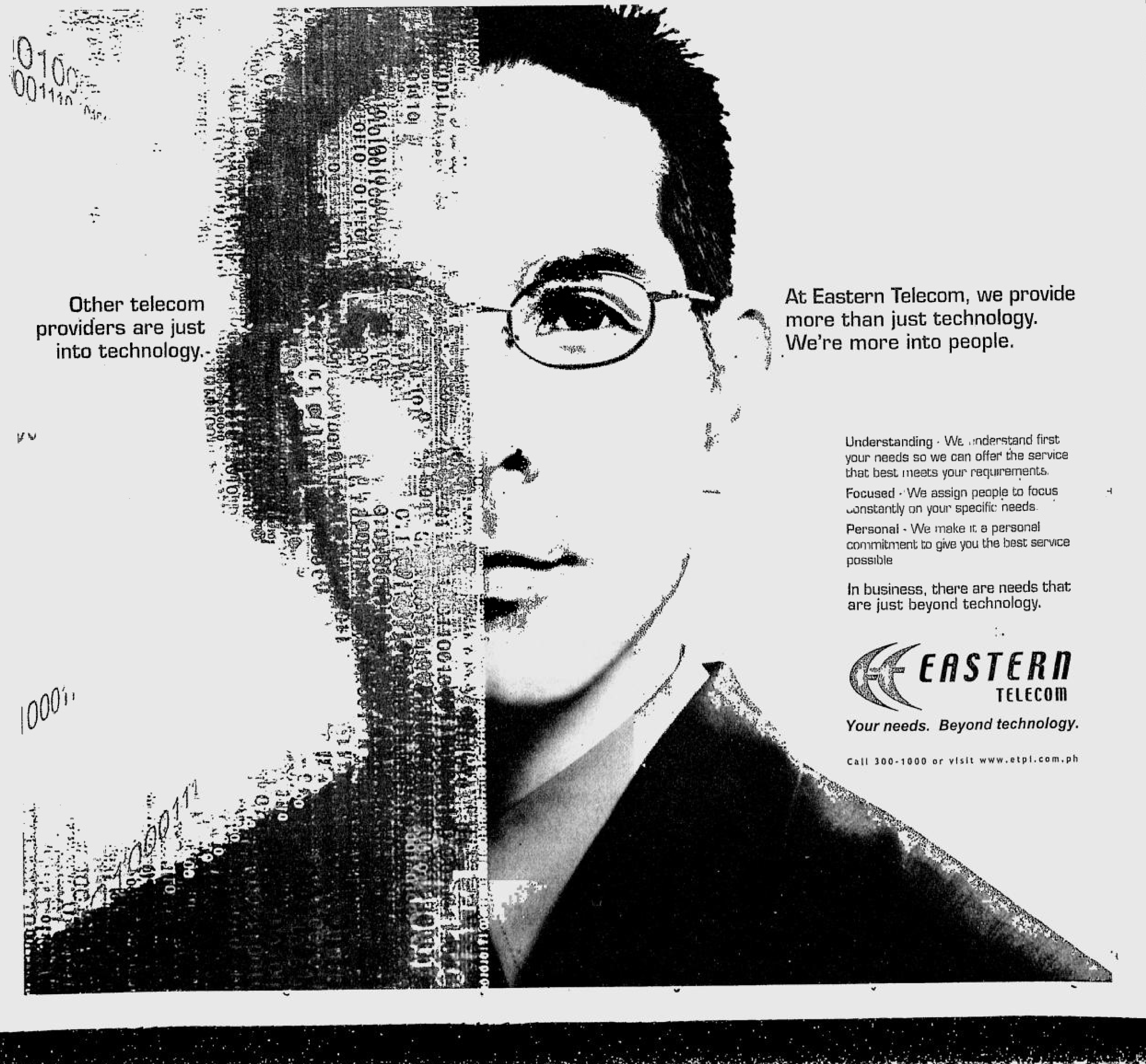
"So there is lots of liquidity and that could be one of the reasons why there was strong buying in government securities which has led to a decrease in interest rates (yields)."

The bond auction on Tuesday was heavily oversubscribed, with the two-year paper fetching a lower-than-expected average rate of 8.738 percent.

Market players had been looking for the paper to fetch a rate of between 8.875 and 9 percent. In the previous auction in July the paper fetched an average rate of 8.415 percent.

Heavy trades were seen in two- to four-year bonds with some smaller deals in five-year paper.

Reuters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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AND so some bishops and priests are a bit, ah, suspicious of the Palace announcement about Gloriaetta's plan for 2004—will she or will she not?

The churchmen note that she already got a message from God last December. That one said, according to Gloriaetta herself, that she should NOT run in 2004.

There's an explanation for the confusion. Today things are awfully different in the confidential memos which the Palace gets from heaven.

* * *

DON'T you see, Father, Gloriaetta enjoys direct access to the Almighty every eight months. Gloriaetta received the last divine memo last December. She should be getting the next one at…well, around this time.

If she gets a different message this time, it's because of a little misunderstanding. At least it's divine misunderstanding!

And so the Almighty does not only work in mysterious ways, based on what we are getting from the Palace, but His messages are also so mysterious. This explains the unfortunate mistake last December.

* * *

PEOPLE close to Gloriaetta are confident that she will get the right message this time, particularly if the message from the good Lord is, well, that it is her divine duty to run.

They say that the country is going through "extraordinary circumstances." Thus, she must run. "Extraordinary circumstances" is also a good excuse for NOT keeping your word.

Let us just hope that God also tells her what we have to do, precisely, to solve our huge unemployment, other than just her running in 2004.

To what extent this cute administration is answerable to those "extraordinary circumstances," the Palace statement inexplicably forgets to say.

* * *

THIS cute administration has been in power longer than the guy they sent home and then confined in a government hospital, the man named Band…Wrist Band.

Wrist Band was in power for about two years and six months, half of which was spent fending off groups which wanted to take over, such as the group of Gloriaetta.

Gloriaetta has been in power for two years and eight months, and we are still going through…well, "extraordinary circumstances."

* * *

STILL, because of those "extraordinary circumstances," whatever in Al Ghozi's name they are, the Palace says that Gloriaetta is swamped with calls for her to run in 2004.

Look at that—swamped with calls! It's as if what our leader does all day is, well, she just answers her cellular phone. This is not correct.

The correct way to look at it is this: That Gloriaetta's candidacy enjoys an overwhelming public approval, which is backed by a loud public clamor, which in turn is propped up by an insistent public demand, not to mention a groundswell of support.

It sounds familiar because we heard it before from Imelda Marcos. That's the Imeldific way. Don't tell me that Imeldific and Gloriaetta listen to the same handlers—whether divine or not!

* * *

ACTUALLY, no law on earth and in heaven can stop Gloriaetta from running, with or without divine guidance. It's just a question of credibility.

In business, some groups ask, if Gloriaetta breaks her word, how will people ever believe her? We have a leader who says one thing and does another.

Now, how does a leader communicate with the people, tell them about programs and things, how they are going to find new jobs?

Not through text, I hope. It's only through words. What the leader says, therefore, takes a lot of importance in governance.

Thus, we have a leader who does not mean what she says. I am not sure if it will not only create more, ah, "extraordinary circumstances."

* * *

THIS cute administration is changing the 16-year old car program. Apparently, the old program does not have enough government control. Under the new program, the BOI will approve each and every application for new car models on a "case to case" basis.

Thus, the BOI wants some mussels in the bureaucracy to control what kind of car you and I can drive in heavy traffic. What's that--mussel control?

Why is it all up to the BOI? Why can't it not be up to the market?

When the government forces upon us its brand of control, we all know what happens. It creates extraordinary circumstances otherwise known as graft and corruption.

* * *

GMA-7 showed the other night that supposedly "controversial" episode of the investigative news program Probe—with an explanation.

The episode was an attempt to expose the "lifestyle" of Pagcor chair Ephraim Genuino. It is an explosive topic. Genuino is a known crony of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, who is supposedly behind the Jose Pidal bank accounts.

Our impression was, because of the subject of the report, GMA-7 censored Probe and killed the story. Not true.

* * *

ACCORDING to Felipe Gozon, chair and president of GMA-7, he only asked the Probe team to update its documents, and then Probe could put out the episode. Thus, the episode came out last Tuesday, but with the explanation.

In other words, Gozon wanted more substance in the report. He called it "responsibility." Many others, perhaps including the Probe team, called it censorship.

You see, the report claimed that, based on Genuino's statement of assets and liabilities for 2001, he did not report all his holdings in various businesses. This is against the law. By implication, Genuino could be hiding something.

As proof, the Probe team had some SEC records of companies with Genuino as a stockholder. But the SEC records were dated 1994. Gozon thought it was not fair.

* * *

DODIE King, the corporate PR of Pagcor, said that the companies which were mentioned in the Probe report were dormant corporations.

One of them, the GKY Corp., in fact, did not even take off the ground, according to King, not to mention that Genuino also had to divest all his business holdings when he joined this cute administration.

According to the Probe report itself, Genuino declared P60 million in assets when he entered the government two years ago. His assets went down to P35 million. That, King says, was due to the divestment.

* * *

STILL, as a viewer, you cannot help but wonder why Probe is doing the so-called "lifestyle" check on Genuino. Let's hope it is just a fad.

He has been in the government for only two years. I mean, it's hard to say if his "expensive lifestyle," if indeed it is such, had anything to do with the government position.

Genuino had other sources of income before he joined the government. His family had several businesses, including computer schools and ice plants.

I thought that the "lifestyle" check should be more fitting for those who have been in the government for most of their working lives. Ping Lacson, for instance.

* * *

FROM what I gathered from GMA-7 people, there was an earlier incident with the Probe team regarding the same subject—Genuino.

At that time, the GMA-7 marketing group warned that, if the network would keep on putting out a critical report on Genuino, Pagcor might withdraw its ads.

The guys at GMA-7 news and public affairs swear to me that, even at that time, in that prior incident, Gozon set the policy. And that is, he didn't care for the ads.

Look, GMA-7 is looking at total revenues of about P6.5 billion this year. And what is Pagcor's ad placement with the station? It is a measly P4 million.

I don't think Gozon is the type to gamble his station's credibility for such a pittance. He has more to lose. Some P6.5 billion, in fact!

Total to put up ₱100-M station

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TOTAL Philippines Corp. said it would invest roughly P100 million in the construction of a service station along the South Luzon Expressway.

Total Philippines president and managing director Jeff Attwood said Tuesday that the planned service station was scheduled to be opened by June next year.

An official of the Philippine National Construction Corp. said Total has a pending permit to put up the station along the northbound side of the South Luzon Expressway.

"PNCC found that Total had submitted all requirements and we have endorsed its application to the Tollway Regulatory Board for approval," the official said.

Once approved, Total's service station would be the only other station aside from Caltex Philippines Inc. to operate near the Alabang exit on the northbound side.

Pilipinas Shell Philipines Corp. and Petron Corp. have one station each on the southbound side of the Slex.

Oil officials regard service stations along the tollways as significant sources of revenues, including non-fuel income from fast-food outlets and convenience stores.

Petron and Shell have previously cited their non-fuels business as a growing factor in pushing up profits.

Also on Tuesday, Total inaugurated a P280-million oil terminal at the Manila Harbor Center.

Attwood said during the launch that the full commissioning of the firm's Manila oil terminal strengthened its position in the highly-competitive petroleum distribution business.

"This makes the company ahead of the pack because Total is now primed and ready to lead in the cutthroat competition," Attwood said.

Shares

From page B1

charges dating back to 1994.

Belle Corp was also actively traded, up 2.0 centavos to 57 centavos after the company said it would spend P450 million to develop a flagship project in Tagaytay City south of Manila over the next two years.

Bank of the Philippine Islands rose 50 centavos to P43.50.

AP, AFP

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GOINGS-ON

Creba urban dev't workshop

HOW the government and the housing and building industry can work together to cope with the housing needs of an increasing population through sustainable urban development and reexamining existing housing development laws will be the basic objective of the pre-convention workshop of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) on Sept. 26, 1-5 p.m., at The Leaders' Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Manila.

Nathaniel von Einsiedel, chair of the Consultants for Comprehensive Environmental Planning Inc., will lead the industry and the government speakers on assessing the Subdivision and Condominium Buyers' Protective Decree and the Economic and Socialized Housing Projects Law.

Meralco stays with Publicis

MANILA Electric Co. has not transferred its marketing communications business to Advertising and Marketing Associates. The agency of record of Meralco is still Publicis AMA Inc.

Meralco said it has not given office space and telephone lines to Advertising and Marketing Associates, which in a purely business transaction has only leased office space and facilities at the Corporate Information Solutions Building located in the Meralco compound.

Nissan Rent-a-Car wins award

NISSAN Rent-a-Car bagged the "Most Outstanding Car Rental Service" Award for the third consecutive year during the 14th Annual National Consumers Awarding Ceremonies of the Consumer's Union of the Philippines in recognition of the company's excellent customer service in the field of transportation.

Founded in April 1992 by a group of local businessmen, Nissan Rent-a-Car has grown to be the largest car rental and leasing company in the country. It owns more than 400 vehicles.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, September 24, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4	4	4	62,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	15,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	43.5	43	43.5	1,130,000
China Banking Corp.	660	660	660	660	100
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	3,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	34.5	34	34.5	194,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	29.5	30	29.5	29.5	424,500
Philippine National Bank	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	75,000
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	57,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	5,000
Security Bank Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	51,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	30	29	30	35,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1710	1710	1710	1710	50
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	205,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1210	1225	1210	1220	2,880
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24.5	24.5	24	24	81,900
Diversified Fin. Network	2	2	2	2	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.7	.71	2,030,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	670	685	670	685	11,870
Ipeople Inc.	0.92	0.95	0.92	.94	430,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.048	0.055	0.048	.055	26,600,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0	5.04	9.049	6,900,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.16	0.16	0.16	.16	10,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	4,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.75	0.8	0.72	.77	19,260,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	.2	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	645	650	640	650	73,760
Ivantage Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.4	.41	180,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.01	3.01	2.013	17,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16.5	16	16.25	503,300
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.75	24.25	24.75	1,457,000
Petron Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.04	3,777,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	102,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.4	0.36	.39	1,430,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	416,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	30	30	665,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18.25	18.25	18	18	1,597,100
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	.69	20,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	.26	180,000
San Miguel Corp. A	53.5	54.5	53.5	54.5	67,300
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63	62.5	63	407,200
Universal Robina Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	2,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.26	.27	210,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	2,000
Ayala Corp.	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	3,169,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.16	0.1	6.1	6.16	190,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	948,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.033	0.03	3.03	1.032	7,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	.75	30,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	5,000
ATR Kim Eng Fin. Corp.	2	2	2	2	4,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.65	0.68	0.65	.66	27,290,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	520,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.32	0.29	.31	9,650,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.023	5,600,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	70,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	321,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	.11	310,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
Ionics Inc.	1.74	1.78	1.7	1.76	1,461,000
Jollivile Holdings Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	20,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,800,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	.011	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.95	0.97	0.94	.97	4,160,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	.3	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.32	.32	8,900,000
Music Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.41	.41	4,280,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.31	0.26	.29	34,550,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	.14	270,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1.02	1	1	136,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.12	0.115	.115	520,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	6,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	9,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0775	0.08	0.0775	.0775	1,000,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	3,300
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.58	0.55	.57	134,480,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	.32	100,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.46	0.47	0.46	.47	250,000
Manila Jockey Club	8	8	8	8	4,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.155	0.19	0.155	.19	220,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	24	24.25	23.5	23.75	782,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6.8	6.3	6.8	6,648,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.19	.2	80,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.185	0.195	0.185	.195	1,250,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	.24	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.245	3,830,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	5,843,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.215	0.21	.215	440,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	65,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.2	6.4	13,508,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	.15	100,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc.B	0.15	0.15	0.15	.15	100,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0038	0.0036	.0038	12,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.195	0.19	.195	330,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.2	0.21	0.2	.21	260,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0048	0.004	8.004	8.0048	50,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.2	9.2	9.29	30,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.01	3.01	3.013	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.003	2.003	2.0032	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.003	2.003	2.0032	24,000,000
Pacifica	0.01	0	1.0	1.01	3,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.15	0.1	5.1	5.15	30,000

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Savings Bank announced the appointment of Margaret Cham as assistant vice president-treasurer of the bank effective Oct. 1.

***

SAN Miguel Corp. confirmed it received a letter from the Presidential Commission on Good Government asking the company to carry out the final and executory decision of the Supreme Court to return to PCGG 25.45 million shares of the company under the Coconut Industry Investment Fund.

***

EXPORT and Industry Bank confirmed it paid its obligations to former Urban Bank depositors under the Liability Servicing Program without availing of the stand-by funds provided by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. and the Social Security System.

***

CROWN Equities Inc. disclosed the resignation of Richard Chiongbian as director of the company effective Sept. 26.

***

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. bought 100,000 of its own shares at P1.30 per shares. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

September 24, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.873515024	1.000000	55.003000
Japan	Yen	0.007783	0.008910	0.490100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.443047	1.652000	90.865000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.112815	0.129151	7.103700
Switzerland	Franc	0.643094	0.736214	40.494000
Canada	Dollar	0.64428	0.737572	40.568700
Singapore	Dollar	0.503177	0.576037	31.683800
Australia	Dollar	0.592696	0.678518	37.320500
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.317139	2.652661	145.904300
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.232932	0.266660	14.667100
Brunei	Dollar	0.501732	0.574383	31.592800
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000119	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021811	0.024969	1.373400
UAE	Dirham	0.23784	0.272279	14.976200
Euro	Euro	1	1.144800	62.967400
Argentina	Peso	0.302778	0.346620	19.065100
Brazil	REAL	0.299251	0.342583	18.843100
Denmark	Kroner	0.134623	0.154116	8.476800
India	Rupee	0.019089	0.021853	1.202000
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.229903	0.263193	14.476400
Mexico	New Peso	0.080501	0.092157	5.068900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.518684	0.593789	32.660200
Norway	Kroner	0.12367	0.141577	7.787200
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015092	0.017277	0.950300
South Africa	Rand	0.122856	0.140645	7.735900
Korea	Won	0.000757	0.000867	0.047700
Sweden	Kroner	0.111995	0.128212	7.052000
Syria	Pound	0.020798	0.023810	1.309600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025959	0.029718	1.634600
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000546	0.000627	0.034500

Gov't sees . . .

From page B1

the year but was delayed.

The proceeds of a program loan become part of the general budget, but usually, its approval and release depend on whether the borrower meets conditions and requirements set by the lender.

The new $200-million World Bank loan for civil service reforms, for instance, would depend on how the government would meet conditions related to the streamlining of bureaucracy.

It might even require the passage of a pending legislation that would provide incentives to state workers deemed redundant and qualified for voluntary retirement.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said as much as 20,000 government workers could be declared redundant or their positions deemed outdated or irrelevant. They could be entitled to additional retirement benefits if Congress would pass the law.

There are 1.5 million public workers, a million of which work for the national government.

Group pushes call center-specific courses in schools

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CALL center industry is urging the government to incorporate call center-specific courses into the curriculum of local colleges and universities in a bid to boost the country's comparative advantage.

Call center builder Diversified Technology Systems Inc. (DTSI) has sought the assistance of industry organization Contact Federation of the Philippines (CFP) in lobbying for the inclusion of basic call center-related courses in the college curriculum.

DTSI executive vice president and chief operating officer Mike Cardenas reasoned that the country might lose its edge over fiercest rivals India and China if nothing would be done, beginning with the existing educational system.

"The government should provide skilled manpower. It should invest in one-semester courses in key universities to help improve the (training of potential call center personnel)," he said in a briefing yesterday.

While most local call center personnel possessed a good command of the English language, he said most of them still lacked the training needed to sustain their edge over their counterparts in other countries.

Cardenas, in an earlier interview, pointed out that China was becoming a very big threat to the country in terms of bagging call center seats.

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NOTICE TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF EASYCALL COMMUNICATIONS PHILS., INC.

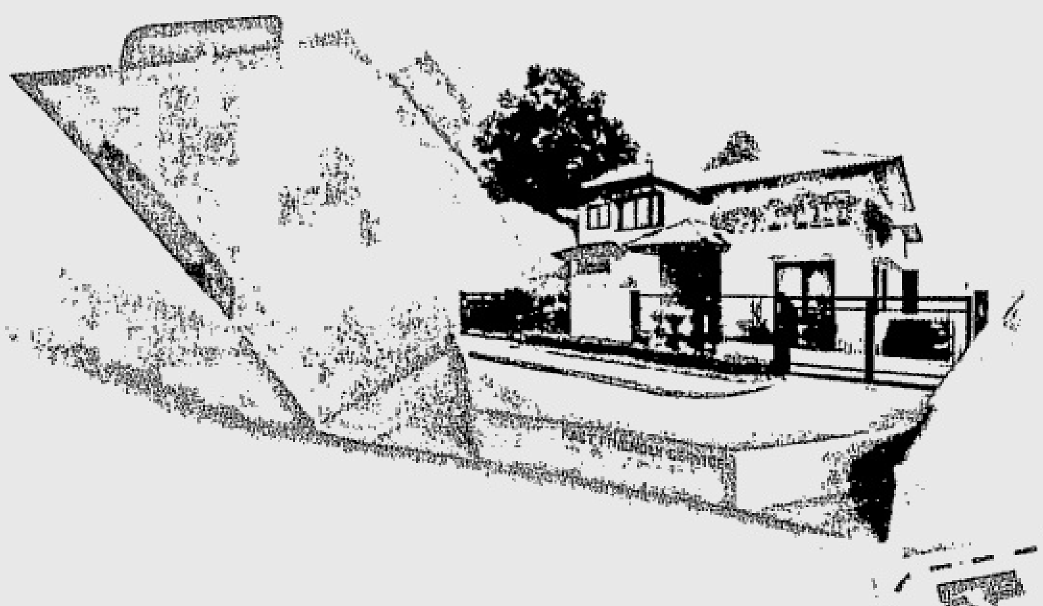
Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Stockholders of EasyCall Communications Phils., Inc. has been approved by the Board of Directors to be moved from October 8, 2003 to November 12, 2003 Wednesday at 10:00 am. Venue will be at the Lighthouse Theater, A.C. Delgado cor. 25th Streets, Port Area, Manila.

Due notice of the meeting including the Agenda thereof and the annual report shall be sent to the individual stockholders not later than the third week of October 2003.

Mandaluyong City. September 23, 2003.

ATTY. ROMELA M. BENGZON
Corporate Secretary

ADVT.



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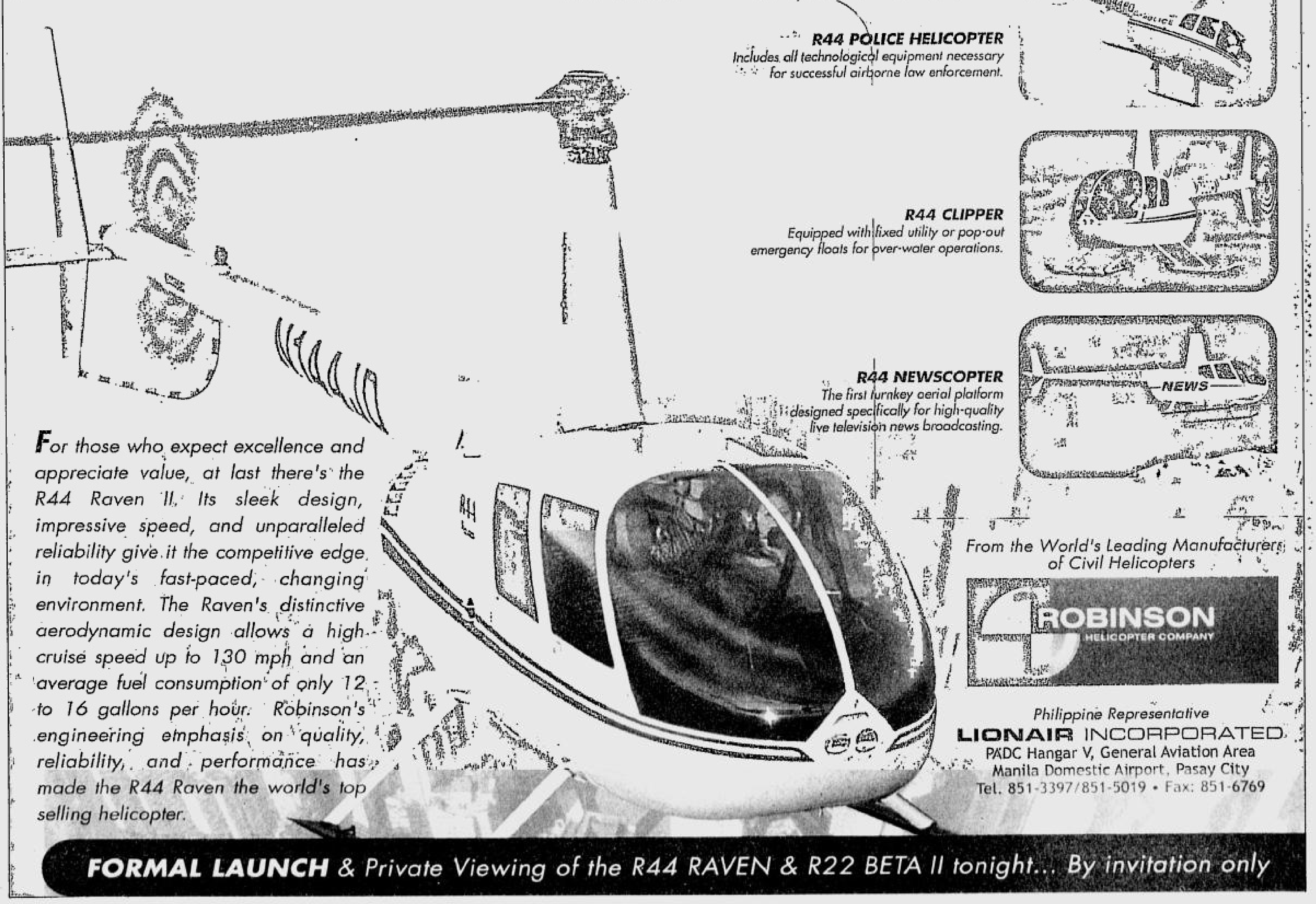

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2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 GIGLI (Exclusive) 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30	2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 GIGLI (Exclusive) 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	MARTIN NIEVERA Sep. 26 & 27, 9PM LANI MISALUCHA Oct. 10 & 11, 9PM	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 PEOPLE I KNOW 1:00, 3:05, 5:10, 7:15, 9:20, 11:25	3 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
4 FREDDY VS. JASON	4 NOWHERE IN AFRICA		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 BASIC 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30	4 FREDDY VS. JASON
	5 INNER SENSES		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	5 BASIC
	6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO			
	7 THE MEDALLION			

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6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
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3

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(FTI, Taguig) TEL. 776-74-21

1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 FIRST TIME
4 RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 RESERVE
5 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
6 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
7 (DTS) FIRST TIME
8 (SDDS) FREDDY VS JASON
9 (DOLBY) BASIC

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
4 (SDDS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 FIRST TIME
6 (DOLBY) MEDALLION
7 (DTS) FREDDY VS JASON
8 BASIC
9 KALABIT

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1 FIRST TIME
2 (SDDS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 (DTS) KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
4 (DOLBY) MEDALLION
5 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
3 (DTS) FREDDY VS JASON
4 FIRST TIME
5 (SDDS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 RESERVE

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2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
4 FIRST TIME

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 MEDALLION
3 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
4 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
5 FIRST TIME

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

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MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821 8242.8400

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 FIRST TIME
3 MEDALLION
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 (DTS) FREDDY VS JASON
6 BASIC
7 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821 8242.8400

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
TEL. (049) 837-0920

1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KALABIT
3 (DTS) KUNG AKO NALANG SANA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 MEDALLION
2 (DTS) KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KALABIT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 (DOLBY) MEDALLION
3 (DTS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KALABIT

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DOLBY) SWAT
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
3 (DOLBY) SWAT
4 (DTS) PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY) KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 (DTS) SWAT
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 FIRST TIME
3 (DTS) KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 MEDALLION

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DTS) MEDALLION
4 KALABIT
5 FIRST TIME

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 KALABIT
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 KALABIT

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 LEGALLY BLONDE
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 (DTS) KALABIT
4 SWAT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 SWAT
3 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 DADDY DAY CARE
3 KALABIT
4 FIRST TIME

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 FIRST TIME
4 NAKED WEAPON

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-0121

1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 NAKED WEAPON
3 (DOLBY) ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 RESERVE

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Festival Mall Cinema
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Filinvest - Alabang
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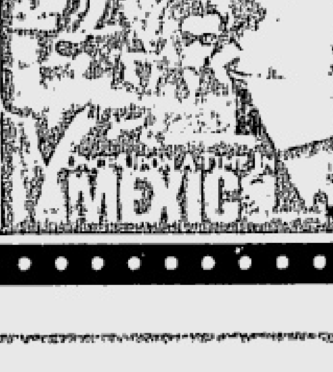

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SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173888

1 BASIC
2 THE MEDALLION
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
7 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
8 FIRST TIME

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 S.W.A.T.
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FIRST TIME
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 ASBOOBS
7 THE MEDALLION
8 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
9 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
10 BASIC

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 S.W.A.T.
6 THE MEDALLION
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
8 BASIC
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 DADDY DAY CARE
11 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
12 FIRST TIME

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 THE MEDALLION
3 BASIC
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
7 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
8 FIRST TIME
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 PEOPLE I KNOW
11 INNER SENSES
12 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
(FOR SEAT RESERVATION CALL 6830630)
2 BASIC
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 CINE EUROPA
7 NOWHERE IN AFRICA
8 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 THE MEDALLION
11 INNER SENSES
12 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 THE MEDALLION
2 INNER SENSES
3 FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 BASIC
7 FREDDY VS. JASON
8 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

SM SOUTHMALL
8008888

1 BASIC
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 PEOPLE I KNOW
5 THE MEDALLION
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 FREDDY VS. JASON
9 FIRST TIME
10 INNER SENSES

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 BASIC
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
3 DADDY DAY CARE
4 S.W.A.T.
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
6 FIRST TIME
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 NAKED WEAPON

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 DADDY DAY CARE
2 RESERVED
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
6 S.W.A.T.
7 RESERVED
8 SPY KIDS 3-D

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 FIRST TIME
5 VISIBLE SECRET
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 FIRST TIME
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FREDDY VS. JASON

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1 S.W.A.T.
2 DADDY DAY CARE
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 BASIC
5 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 BASIC
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 DADDY DAY CARE
4 S.W.A.T.

THE PODIUM

1 NOWHERE IN AFRICA 11:10 FS/11:40 MF/2:30/5:20/8:10/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:20 END
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

September 25, 2003
Thursday

SM Megamall Cinema 6
CINE EUROPA

Shades (Belgium)
2:00 p.m.
Nowhere in Africa (Germany)
4:30 p.m.
The Others (Spain)
7:00 p.m.
The Handcuff King (Finland)
9:30 p.m.

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1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30 THX	4 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	5 FREDDY VS. JASON 10:30, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	6 BASIC 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
7 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	9 NOWHERE IN AFRICA 10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
8 PEOPLE I KNOW 12:05, 2:15, 4:30, 6:40, 9:00	10 INNER SENSES 12:05, 2:15, 4:30, 6:40, 9:00

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1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
2 FREDDY VS. JASON 10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40
3 THE MEDALLION 10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40
4 PEOPLE I KNOW 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
5 INNER SENSES 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
6 BASIC 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

Metro East
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682-8280

1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 BASIC
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 THE MEDALLION
8 1ST TIME

Novaliches
935-3229 / 31

1 THE MEDALLION
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 BASIC
8 1ST TIME

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1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 1ST TIME	2 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
3 VISIBLE SECRET	3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 MR. BONES	4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 FREDDY VS. JASON	5 1ST TIME
6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	6 THE MEDALLION

Bacolod (034)441-0458/59	Iloilo (033)336-8070 to 78
1 SPY KIDS 3D	1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2	2 S.W.A.T.
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	3 SPY KIDS 3D
4 DADDY DAY CARE	4 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
5 S.W.A.T.	5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN	6 DADDY DAY CARE

Sta. Rosa Laguna (049)837-0907	Malabon Letre Square 288-0985/2575
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO	1 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 KALABIT	2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA	3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 1ST TIME	4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 THE MEDALLION	

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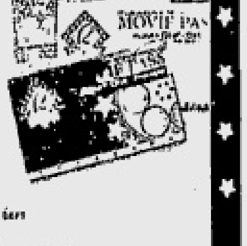

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MITSUBISHI

98 Spc Wagon Rush 8950971

'98DELICA EXCEED P270T 4x4 PROJECTOR LAMP CRYSTALITE/HI-ROOF 3609523

TOYOTA

94 Corolla GLi Ltd 1stOwner 200T Neg 6457753

'94 Tam FX D-sel 995-0786

'94VANETTE all power 12seater 170T 0919-8237786

96 XE CD ready P280T w/alarm 0919-8237786

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Pajero Land Cruiser Surf Delica Salari Terrano MU Trooper Lite-Hi Ace Space Gear Serena Vanette Elf Suzuki Canter etc. Trade in Financing w/ Warranty neg A1 9120647; 0917-8342020

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★Vans Coaster Bus 440-9171

MB HIACE URVAN 8276605

STAREX:Low Rates 7415917

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VANS/CAR 741-1356

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1.5% CARLOAN 7880357

1.5% EasyCarLoan 4000166 -67

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6567605

1HR FastCarLoan 7125202

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o Taking Car 6560140

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

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2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

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DOG TRAINER 4528681

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DIRECT HIRE MKTG PERSONNEL 20-45 COLL GRAD/LEVEL W/ W/O EXP 4370454 MS SHIE

★Ofc Mktg Staff 7,290 Basic w/ Comm. Allwns 18-45 y/o Look 4 Mr. Roco 8818326 / 8434614

JOB HIRING 09167054572

Mktg Staf 09192535623 GLENDA

MKTG STF 09205921022 SKY

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Bejamin M. De Guzman Sr. has been the subject of a deed of extra-judicial partition and settlement among the heirs as Doc. No. 40; Page. No. 8; Book No. IV; Series of 2003 of Notary Public Lourdes J. Espinosa. (PDI-Sept.18,25 & Oct. 2,2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

INVITATION TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu through the Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) invites qualified Contractors with "AAA" License, and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Large "B" for Buildings and/or Joint Venture groups with the same or more total capacity to participate in a Public Bidding for the Construction of the Substructure for the Proposed Cebu Megadome Project located at Quano Ave., and C. D. Seno St., Mandaue, Reclamation Area.

Interested bidders are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated Pre-C to the Chairman, Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee, prior to the Issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

The contract shall include the complete construction of the said building with a total floor area of around 27,000 square meters.

Including the following Items of Work

Site Development Works
Foundation Works
Concrete Works
Structural Excavation Works
Civil Works

Minimum Equipment Requirement:

Equipment Type	Quantity	Availability
Crane with Diesel Pile Hammer	2 units	Owned
Dump Truck, 5 cu. m. Cap	5 units	Owned
Back Hoe (Crawler Type) 0.5 cu. m. Cap.	3 units	Owned
Payloader	2 units	Owned
Concrete Mixers (Transit – 5-6 cu. m.)	5 units	Owned
Concrete Batching Plant 60 cu. m./hr.	1 unit	Owned
Concrete Pump	1 unit	Owned
Tower Cranes, 10 tons	1 unit	Owned
Mini Vibro Compactors, 1 Ton	3 units	Owned
Hydraulic Telescopic Boom/Crane, 25-30 Tons	2 units	Owned
Rammer, 330 x 220 mm	2 units	Owned
Electric Generators	2 units	Owned
Air Compressors	3 units	Owned
Welding Machine, 300 Amp.	2 units	Owned
Bar Cutter & Bender, 28 mm. Cap.	2 units	Owned

Dates and Deadline for Submission of the following documents

	Dates	Time	Place
Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Pre-C	**Sept. 23-25, 2003**	8:00-5:00	PEO
Deadline of Submission of Pre-C documents	**Oct. 03, 2003**	8:00-5:00	PEO
Issuance of Notice to Prequalified Contractor	**Oct. 15, 2003**	8:00-5:00	PEO

Pre-qualified Bidders will be notified on the date of issuance of Plans and Bid Documents.

Set of Plans and related documents can be obtained from the Office of the Provincial Engineer upon Payment of a non-refundable amount of P25,000.00.

The Province of Cebu accepts Bid Securities/Performance Bond in the form of Cash, Managers Check and Bidder's Bond through GSIS only.

The Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waives any defect contained therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) PABLO P. GARCIA
Governor
Chairman, PBAC
Province of Cebu

(PDI – September 22 & 25, 2003)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Attention Dog Owners

FREE SEMINAR!!

What: Pet Pantry Nutrition Seminar
When: September 25, 7:00 pm
Where: Malolos, Bulacan

Speaker: Mr. Don Lockman
for Pet Pantry, USA.
For inquiries, please call 844-2385
and cell is 0916-758-5541

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor & Employment
POEA Bldg., Ortigas Avenue,
cor. EDSA, Mandaluyong City 1501
P.O. Box 175 Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Tel. 7221144 • 7221156 • E-mail: info@poea.gov.ph
Website: www.poea.gov.ph

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 25
Series of 2003

TO : ALL CONCERNED
SUBJECT : GUIDELINES ON THE CONTRACTS e-SUBMISSION SYSTEM FOR LANDBASED RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Pursuant to the e-Link for OFWs Project of the Department of Labor and Employment and the thrust of the Administration to streamline processes and documentary requirements in order to facilitate the mobilization of overseas Filipino workers, the Contracts e-Submission System shall be implemented for the Landbased Center in accordance with the following guidelines:

I. Coverage

All agencies that are registered by the Administration as participant in the Contract e-Submission program after complying with the following requirements:

HARDWARE : Pentium 4 Class (1.8 Gz)
256MB RAM
8MB Video RAM
SVGA Monitor
40 GB Standard IDE Drive Storage
Operating System Software : Windows 2000
Windows XP (Home or Professional)
Network : Stable Internet Connection
UPS : At least two minutes power to allow proper shutdown
Personnel : IT personnel / team / unit

The POEA shall provide the agency participant with a copy of the POEA PEACE CD installer and a copy of the registration/accreditation database of the agency's principals. Upon registration as participant in the program, the agency mailbox is created and maintained in a hosting service located at the program's data center.

II. Procedures for the Electronic Submission of Requests for Processing

1. Agency encodes the request for processing, contract particulars and information sheet of the workers
2. Agency submits the encoded data to POEA through the Internet.
3. POEA automatically downloads data and posts the same to the POEA contract processing database
4. POEA electronically notifies the agency of the result of posting.
5. Agency receives the notification from POEA which indicates the RFP number.
6. Agency fills up the e-Submit Form (copy attached) and presents this to the assessment counter at the Landbased Center.
7. Agency representative pays the assessed amount at the cashier counter at the Landbased Center. An e-Receipt is issued which serves as the worker's exit clearance.
8. Verified individual employment contracts of overseas performing artists for Japan and household workers for any country shall be presented at the POEA counter for stamping and signature by the designated officer prior to assessment and payment of fees.

III. Employment Contracts of Workers

In accordance with Section 1, Rule III, Part III of the POEA Rules and Regulations Governing the Recruitment and Employment of Landbased Overseas Workers, recruitment agencies shall be responsible for providing every worker with a copy of his employment contract. The individual employment contract is based on the master employment contract approved upon registration/accreditation of the principal/employer. The worker shall present his contract at the Labor Assistance Center upon request.

All master employment contracts approved by the Landbased Center upon registration of the principal shall be endorsed to the Central Records Division of the Administration for file and reference.

IV. Participation Cost

A minimal cost for maintenance of the hosting services of the agency's mailbox shall be charged to agencies availing of the e-Submission system.

V. Participants in the e-Submission program may still avail of the present system and procedure for the processing of worker documents and issuance of exit clearance in case technical problems are experienced by the e-Submission system.

The Guidelines shall be effective fifteen days (15) after publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

(Sgd.) **ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS BALDOZ**
Administrator

(PDI–Sept. 25, 2003)

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Kasalan sa Tagaytay
6th Leg

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10:00am-7:00pm
Days Hotel Tagaytay

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***Kasalang Filipino* Supplement**

On November 23, 2003, Philippine Daily Inquirer Classifieds presents the Kasalang Filipino Supplement -- a wedding special featuring helpful wedding planning articles and listings of the best wedding products and services in the country.

Be part of the Kasalang Filipino Supplement! For more details, please contact Kasal.com at (632) 415-9249, 416-1670, 365-5510; fax. (632) 414-3596, e-mail. info@kasal.com.

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Wedding Supplier Directory Page

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(PAASCU ACCREDITED)

WANTED FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING!!!

☛ **GS SCIENCE TEACHER**
☛ **GS GUIDANCE COUNSELOR**
(Graduate of Psychology, preferably male with experience)

Applicants must be Catholic, not more than 35 years old, with above average scholastic records and must have passed the L.E.T. (for teacher applicants). ATTRACTIVE SALARY AND BENEFITS AWAITS SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS.

Apply personally and bring your transcript of records for interview on September 30, 2003, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

(ALL CLASSROOMS ARE FULLY AIR-CONDITIONED)

Republic of the Philippines
Procurement Service
Inter-Agency Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY COPY PAPER** for the **PS Stocks.**

The approved budget for this contract is **P11,220,000.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **October 2, 2003, Thursday, 9:30 A.M.,** at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St. Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **September 17, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 1,500.00).**

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **October 16, 2003, Thursday at 1:30 P.M.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. 563-93-67 or 563-94-02.

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – September 18 & 25, 2003)

Office of the President
BCDA
Bases Conversion Development Authority

BASES CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A SIMPLIFIED BIDDING ASSET DISPOSITION PROGRAM - PHASE 2

The Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting, after two (2) failed biddings, interested proponents to participate in a simplified bidding of Bonifacio South Lots 4 and 5 Block 55 located within the Expanded Big Delta, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila covering an approximate total area of 3,266 square meters.

Interested proponents may submit their Letter of Interest to BCDA no later than 02 October 2003. Interested proponents can address their letters to:

THE CHAIRMAN
ADP COMMITTEE-2
BCDA Corporate Center
Gozar corner Lucas Streets
Villamor Air Base, Pasay City

You may direct your inquiries to Aileen Zosa, Bambie Andal and/or Joji Caniones at telephone numbers 551-3006 to 11 local 124 or 110.

(Sgd.) **RUFO COLAYCO**
President and Chief Executive Officer

(PDI–Sept. 25 & 29, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
Fourth Judicial Region, Branch 30
San Pablo City

HEIRS OF FRANCISCO FEDERIZO
herein represented by their
Attorney-In-Fact
CESAR FEDERIZO,
Plaintiff,

CIVIL CASE NO. SP-6011(030)
- for -
"RECOVERY OF OWNERSHIP

- versus -

PROSERFINA CUELLO, et. al.
Defendants.
x---x

ORDER

Acting on the "MOTION TO SUBSTITUTE PARTY DEFENDANTS and MOTION FOR LEAVE OF COURT TO SERVE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION", the same is hereby granted.

As manifested by the counsel for the plaintiff, ATTY. ALEX H KATIGBAK, the publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines be in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, at the expense of the movant.

SO ORDERED.

Given in open court this 01st day of August, 2003 at San Pablo City.

(Sgd.) GREGORIO T. VILLANUEVA
Presiding Judge

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION, BRANCH__
SAN PABLO CITY

Civil Case No. SP-6011(03) Summons
Heirs of Francisco Federizo,
represented by their Atty -in fact
Cesar Federizo,
Plaintiff/s,

versus-

Proserfina Cuello, et al,
Defendant/s.

To Proserfina Cuello, Caterina Cuello,
Bernabe Cuello, Sr. Illuminada Cuello,
Luz Cuello all residents of Lopez Jaena St.,
San Pablo City

City Assessor of San Pablo City, San Pablo City

You are hereby required to enter your appearance in the above-entitled case within fifteen (15) days after the service of this summons upon you, exclusive of the day of such service and to answer the complaint of the Plaintiffs which is hereto attached and herewith served upon you, within the time fixed by the rules of court. If you fail to appear within the time aforesaid, the Plaintiffs will take judgment against you by default and demand from this court the relief applied for in the said complaint

City of San Pablo, May 15, 2003

(Sgd.) ATTY. MELVIN C. DEQUITO
Clerk of Court VI

(PDI - Sept. 25 & Oct. 2, 2003)

OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT FOR SALE!

We wish to invite interested parties to bid for Office Tables, Chairs, Cabinets, Computers, and other office equipment.

LOCATION: Building E, Bonifacio Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila

For inquiries and further details, please call Ms Claire Raymundo at 885 3706 (555 0002 loc. 3706) or Mr. Froilan Tejada at 885 3739 (555 0002 loc 3739) and (0917) 627 8288. Offers should be sent to Mr. Tejada at the above address on or before October 17, 2003. All offers to purchase shall be subject to approval by company approving authority.

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

Date 22 September 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. Contract Code **Sp03.BSSP.MI-0006**
Title **Construction, Erection and Installation of 138KV Substation Equipment for the New Bunawan Switching Station**
Location **Bunawan, Davao City**
2. The works to be completed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all superintendence, labor, materials, supplies, tools and equipment (except materials and equipment specified to be furnished by TRANSCO), and constructing complete the substation and installing all substation equipment to complete the Construction, Erection and Installation of 138kV Substation Equipment for the New Bunawan Switching Station in accordance with the Plans and Specifications. The work also includes site development, construction of new control house, warehouse, pumphouse and guardhouse, etc.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid is **SIXTY SIX MILLION SEVEN HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTY THREE PESOS (PHP66,740,883.00)** from the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) of National Transmission Corporation.
4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino contractors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract/project to be bid with the following License and Registration Particulars:
License at least **"Category AAA - Specialty: Electrical Works"**
Registration : at least **"Large B - Specialty: Electrical Works"**
5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by Transco in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
6. Eligibility Documents and Forms **will be available for issuance on September 25, 2003** at the Bids and Contracts Management Department, National Transmission Corporation, Ground Floor, TransCo Building, Power Complex, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, Contractor's License and a payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 per copy.
7. **Deadline for submission** of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before **October 24, 2003** and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
8. Contractor, not year included in the Transco's List of Registered Contractors, who wishes to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A Certificate of Registration will be issued to contractors upon approval.
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - Taxpayer's Identification Number;
   - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation, including in the case of procurement of civil works, non-inclusion in the "blacklist" of contractors issued by the CIAP.
   - Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;
   - Contractor's License.
9. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all Bids or request for registration without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Sept. 25, 27 & 30, 2003)

Kagawaran ng Ugnayang Panlabas
Department of Foreign Affairs

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Metro Manila
Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Foreign Affairs-Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee (DFA-PBAC) is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and bid for the following service contracts:

A. JANITORIAL SERVICE CONTRACT
B. TRANSPORT LEASE SERVICE CONTRACT

All interested bidders may avail of bid documents from **19 September-3 October 2003**, upon submission of a Letter of Intent addressed to the undersigned and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (Php 500.00) at the DFA-PBAC Secretariat, Office of the Undersecretary for Administration, 12th Floor, DFA Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Tel. # 834-4066. Prequalification documents must be submitted to the DFA-PBAC Secretariat on or before the dates specified below for each service. Applications for eligibility shall be evaluated using the "FASS/FAIL" criteira and only the companies prequalified by the DFA-PBAC shall be allowed to submit bids. Prebid conferences may be held upon determination by the DFA-PBAC for purposes of clarifying certain issues.

ACTIVITY	JANITORIAL SERVICE	TRANSPORT SERVICE
Submission of Prequal Docs	17 Oct. 2003, 1700H (deadline)	18 Oct. 2003, 1700H (deadline)
Submission of Sealed Bids	07 Nov 2003, 1400H (deadline)	10 Nov 2003, 1400H (deadline)
Opening of Sealed Bids	07 Nov 2003 1500H	10 Nov 2003 1500H

DFA-PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, and to waive any deficiencies and required formalities embodied therein. DFA-PBAC assumes no obligations whatsoever to offset the expenses and/or losses the bidder may have incurred in the preparation of the bids. DFA-PBAC further reserves the right to declare a failure of bid, and/or not to award the contract, and makes no assurances that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **FRANKLIN M. EBDALIN**
Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs
Chairman, DFA-PBAC

(PDI – September 18 & 25, 2003)

National Power Corporation

September 24, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Power Corporation (NPC) of the Republic of the Philippines invites all registered Steam Coal Suppliers/Procedures, foreign and local, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the prompt supply and delivery of 5 x 65,000 Mt +/- 7% Imported Steaming Coal for Sual Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant for CY 2003 (Batch 5).

The complete sets of eligibility requirements/bidding documents are available for issuance at the Office of the Bids and Contract Services Department (BCSD), NPC-OBC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 924-5361/922-1622, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00).

Registered prospective bidders shall be evaluated as to eligibility based on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria prescribed in the eligibility requirements/tender documents.

The requirements are tabulated hereunder:

CY 2003 (Batch 5)

OPEN TENDER

Schedule	Plant	Vol. (MT)	Approved Budget for The Contract (ABC)*	Pre-bid Conference	Submission of Eligibility Docs/Bids (E-bidding)
SCF-G2.5.02.1	SCFTPP	5 x 65,000	US $12,350,000.00	Oct. 6, 2003 2:00 PM Sinulog Rm. Solarium	Oct. 17, 2003 10:00 AM Kanao Rm. Solarium

**** - Load Tolerance not Included***

Delivery Period: November to December 2003

The Contracts Award Committee (CAC), NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids, at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

Any inquiry regarding the above invitation shall be addressed to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) **SILVANO C. ZANORIA**
SVP, ME & TMS and
Chairman, Contracts Award Committee

(PDI - Sept. 25 2003)

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"To our dearest 'Ling, Daddy and Lolo,
when we look up to heaven, we will say...
Thank you for all the loving memories.
We love you and we will forever miss you..."

DR. GREGORIO E. TORRES

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on Wednesday, 24 September 2003 at the age of 81.

His bereaved wife : **Beatriz**

Children and their spouses : **Greta** and **Ramon Reyes**, **Gigi**, **Ma. Beatriz** and **Jimmy Lina**, **Gilbert** and **Kim**, **Bettina** and **Rodolfo Paloma** & **Chinita** and **Mark Co**

Grandchildren : **Kathrina** and **Greggy**, **Bea**, **Carlo** and **Justin**, **Glenn** and **Georgette**, **Georgina**, **Bianca**, **Bryan** and **Gio** & **Kristine**, **Kevin** and **Joyce**

request the pious readers to pray for the
eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Sta. Rita de Cascia Parish,
Philam Homes, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, 27th of September 2003
at the family mausoleum in
Eternal Gardens Memorial Park
after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

The Board of Directors,
Management and Staff of

RURAL BANK OF NORZAGARAY

condole with the family of

DR. GREGORIO E. TORRES

Chairman of the Board

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on Wednesday, 24 September 2003
at the age of 81.

His remains lie in state at the Sta. Rita de Cascia
Parish, Philam Homes, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, 27th
of September 2003 at the family mausoleum
in Eternal Gardens Memorial Park
after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

His loving wife **Beatriz**; his children
and their spouses **Greta** and **Ramon Reyes**,
Gigi, **Ma. Beatriz** and **Jimmy Lina**,
Gilbert and **Kim**, **Bettina** and
Rodolfo Paloma & **Chinita** and **Mark Co**,
and grandchildren request relatives,
friends and the pious readers to pray
for his eternal rest.

ESPERANZA V. MAGTOTO

Born: July 12, 1925 – Cavinti, Laguna
Died: August 29, 2003 – Canada

"**Mommy Panchang**" is terribly missed by her loving husband **Jesus Magtoto**; sons **Arden & Emmie Magtoto**, and **Sonny & Leilin**; grandchildren **Allen**, **Armie**, **Jhon-Jhon**, **Jed**, & **Laurelee**. Prayer Vigil at the Magtoto Residence, 94 Calypso St., Acropolis, Libis, Q.C. on Sept. 25 & 26, 2003. Interment & Mass: 2:00 p.m., Sept. 27, at Christ the King Greenmeadows Chapel, Q.C.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Julia Francisco Feliciano

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on September 23, 2003 at the age of 86.

Her bereaved children **MAXIMIANO & LOURDES** (†), **ROBERTO & LYDIA**, **GAUDENCIO & ADELAIDA**, **FRANCISCO & REBECCA**, **THELMA & EUSTACIO**, **OLIVIA & CEFERINO**, **CAMILO & MILA** (†), **NELIA & ERAÑO**, **CORAZON & CELSO**; grandchildren, sisters, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence, 208 Natividad Street, Morong, Rizal.

Interment will be on Sunday, September 28, 2003 at the Holy Angels Memorial Park, Morong, Rizal after the 2:00 p.m. Requiem Mass at the Morong Catholic Church.

"Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come..." Psalm 23:6

TOMASITA RUIZ FALCON

of Tierra Verde, Quezon City
Bontoc Mt. Prov. and Tabuk, Kalinga

Peacefully joined our Lord
on 22 September 2003 at the age of 68.

Her loving husband **Pedro**; children **Rommel** and **Arlene**, **Jun** and **Suzette**; grandchildren **Brent Jeffrey**, **Brent Peter**, **Kristine Mae**, **Dominic Iniko**, **Dominic Jiro** and **Jesus Pedrito**, brother, sisters, in-laws, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on September 27, 2003 at Himlayang Pilipino after the celebration of the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass at San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish Church, Tierra Verde Subd. T. Sora, Quezon City.

In loving Memory of Our Dear Father

RUSTICO "Rusty" S. GINEZ

who joined his Creator last September 23, 2003.

He is survived by his sons,
Ulysses, Moses, Orestes and **Summers**
and their respective families.

His body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz Chapel - E
Araneta Avenue corner Kalinaya Street, Quezon City.

Interment will take place on Sunday, September 28, 2003 -
11:00 AM at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Q.C.

Our Dearly Beloved Papa

PEDRO LANSANG AYSON, SR.

Peacefully joined our Lord and his wife ***Cristina Dela Rosa***
on September 23, 2003 at the age of 86.

His loving children **Agnes**, **Dr. Renato** and **Nelia**, **Pedro Jr.** and **Chit**; grandchildren **Alvin** and **Nancy**, **Vines**, **Dennis**, **Jeffrey**, **Anna**, **Rene Anthony**, **Peter**, **Patricia** and **Paul**; great grandchildren **Vincent**, **Joey** and **Gavin**; sister **Sor. Anunciacion Ayson, O.P.**; nephews and nieces, especially **Boots Ayson-Jumat**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel 1-B, Nacional Memorial Homes, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 27, 2003 at Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Kalookan City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

A Thank You Message

The Family, Relatives and In-laws
of the late

LILIA D. FARIN-VITUG

Jan. 23, 1938 – Aug. 15, 2003

Wish to extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation for visiting us...
For the flowers and offerings you gave...
For your messages of sympathy...
For the prayers and holy masses you offered...
For the donations you gave...
For keeping vigil with us...
For your words of comfort and attending the funeral and cremation rites...
And for those who could not come and for those who would come to know later of her departure in life but nevertheless included her in your prayers...

WE DEEPLY AND SINCERELY THANK YOU.

Husband : **Atty. EULOGIO C. VITUG;**
Daughter : **LILICEL;** Son-in-Law : **JOSELITO VELASQUEZ;**
Grandchildren **JOSHUA, CAITLIN, VERONICA** and **MIKEY**.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

"Don't worry Mommy, when we look up to Heaven,
we all say... We love you and we will always remember you..."

Our Dear Beloved Mommy

PILAR M. CUETO-LEACHON

of Brgy. Lalud, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro

Peacefully joined our Lord Creator
on Monday, 22 September 2003 at the age of 68.

Husband : **Judge Emilio L. Leachon, Jr.**

Children and their spouses : **Jhojo** and **Joey Balbuena**, **Dr. Tony** and **Dr. Marge Leachon**, **Marita** and **Francis Ramirez**, **Lito** and **Alfa Leachon**, **Marivic** and **Johnny Aliac**, **Archie** and **Adel Leachon** & **Atty. Doy** and **Rona Leachon**

Grandchildren : **RJ**, **JM** and **Chi-Chi Balbuena**, **Mikan**, **Vana** and **Jolo Leachon**, **Dianne**, **Gef** and **Alyanna Ramirez**, **April**, **Biboy** and **Mari Leachon**, **Xerox** and **Marc Aliac**, **Caroline** and **Buboy Leachon** & **Red** and **Beige Leachon**

Surviving Siblings : **Nydia Cueto-Agarao** and **Dr. Alex M. Cueto**

and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City on Sunday, 28 September 2003 after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Please omit flowers, instead donations to Mommy's community project "Lalud Chapel" will be highly appreciated.

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty."

Psalm 91:1

Our beloved "Papa Doc"

REMIGIO A. CAMACHO, M.D.

of Baliuag, Bulacan & Tondo, Manila

Peacefully joined our Lord & Creator
on September 22, 2003 at the age of 71.

His loving wife **REMEDIOS BROTONEL CAMACHO**; children **DOC RAFFY & CYNTHIA**, **RED & JOEDY**, **GING & SONNY**, **ACHEL**; grandchildren **ANGELA**, **RICHARD**, **RYAN**, **CHARMAINE**, **RAELYN**, **JENNINA**, **JOSHUA**, **JEZRIEL**, **YAN-YAN** and **OWIE**; request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 28 September 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the Holy Mass at 10:00 a.m.

MAYSIE "GIBY" ALVIA-YAZON

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on September 21, 2003.

Gerry and children; **Derek**, **Geraldine-Micolle** and **Ingrid** as well as her mother, **Lita Alvia** and siblings invite readers to join us in prayers for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels on Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Please be with us in Holy Mass and Christian prayers at 8:00 p.m. this Friday and at 8:00 a.m., Saturday at the chapel. Interment will follow in Manila Memorial Park.

B.G. ALFREDO D. DAYOT (Ret.)

Class '42
Philippine Military Academy

Peacefully joined his Creator
on September 22, 2003 at the age of 86.

His body (ashes) lies in state at Rm. 10 La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 27, 2003 at the Libingan ng mga Bayani after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."

Matthew 10:39

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
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CLASSIFIEDS

NFA employee wins Lingkod Bayan Award, brings pride to the food agency

WITH HIS RESOURCEFULNESS for designing an insect trap that saves the agency P1.9 million every year, Assistant Provincial Manager Fortunato B. Bulao earned a Lingkod Bayan Award from the Civil Service Commission.

Bulao's insect trap invention reduced grains storage losses and prevented contamination of stored grains in warehouses from chemical residues caused by the use of pesticides.

Bulao proudly received a gold medallion and a plaque from no less than President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on September 19, 2003 along with other Lingkod Bayan and Dangal ng Bayan awardees in simple ceremonies held at the Ceremonial Hall in Malacañang Palace.

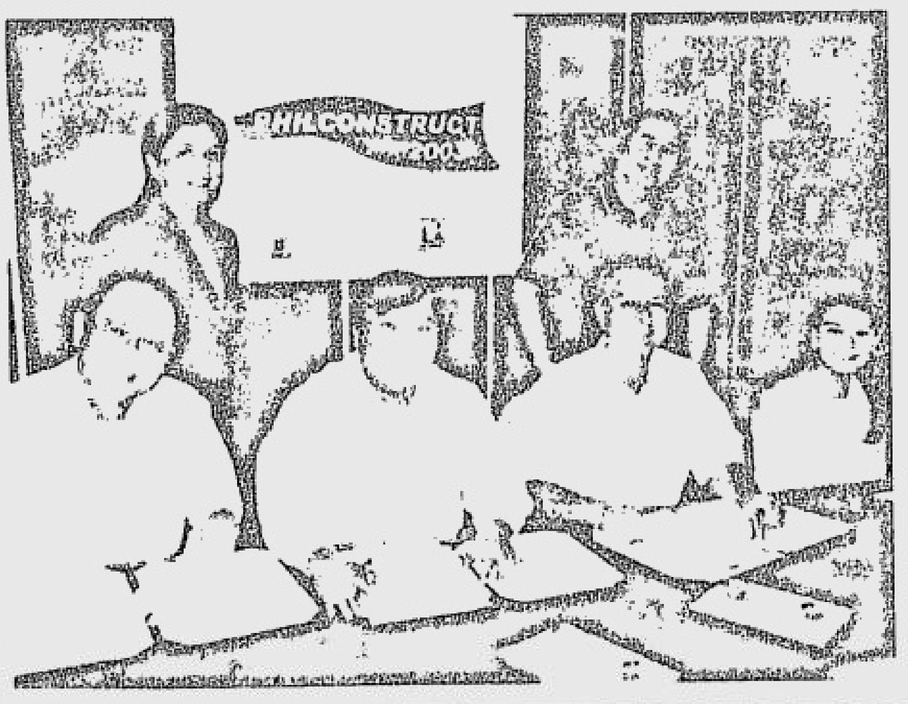
He was accompanied on stage by NFA Deputy Administrator Pedro Hernando, Jr., Regional Director for Region II Danilo Bonabon, Lingayen Provincial Manager Art Figueroa, and his wife and only child.

Aside from the gold medallion and plaque, Bulao was awarded with P100,000, full scholarship from the UP System, Philippine Normal University or Technological University of the Philippines, P100,000 worth of personal accident insurance coverage from The Insular Life Insurance Co. Ltd., a Suki card from Mercury Drug, and a 2-night stay at the Manila Hotel. The scholarship may be transferred to Bulao's wife or to his child.

Bulao will likewise receive a salary increase equivalent to the next higher position.

The awarding ceremonies were held on the occasion of the Philippine Civil Service's 103rd Anniversary.

A Parangal Pasasalamat concert followed in Teatro Aguinaldo, Quezon City to honor eight individual and group PAG-ASA awardees.



LCSPI SPONSORS PHILCONSTRUCT 2003

Lafarge Cement Services (Philippines), Inc. (LCSPI) sponsors Philconstruct 2003 set on November 13 to 16 at the World Trade Center. Shown at the signing of the agreement are (seated L-R) Philippine Constructors Association, Inc. (PCA) 1st vice president and Philconstruct 2003 chairman Engr. Jorge A. Consunji, PCA president Engr. Emilio J. Tumbocon and LCSPI president Erdogen Pekenç as and LCSPI sales admin & marketing services manager Ma. Theresita C. Lim, (standing L-R) PCA executive director Manolito P. Madrasto and Philconstruct 2003 exhibit manager L.A. Ducut & Company, Inc. managing director Lilibeth D. Abais.

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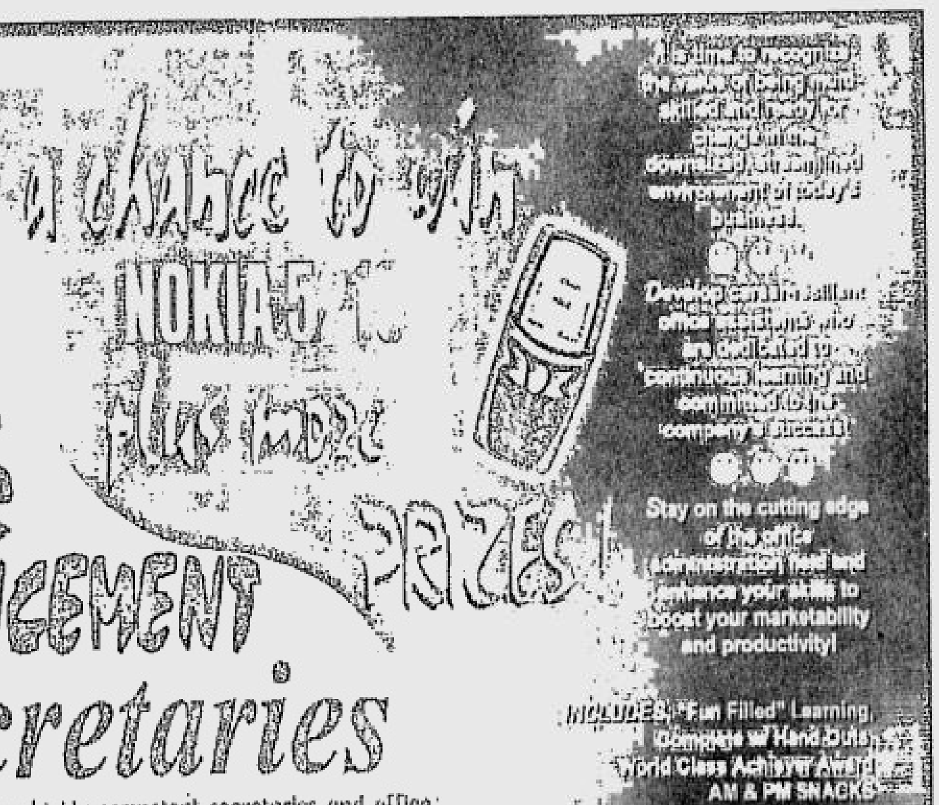

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San Miguel Philharmonic Festival at The Podium

The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale will bring wonderful music for everyone as they perform a Music Festival for two consecutive weekends at The Podium in Ortigas Center.

Scheduled on Sept. 26 to 28 and on Oct. 4 to 5, the performances will be conducted by Ryan Cayabyab, Jonathan Velasco and Arnel Feliciano. It brings to the upscale mall the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra's repertoire spanning centuries of diverse music; and the voices of the award-winning San Miguel Master Chorale, recently named the Best Chorale Group in the the Aliw Awards for quality productions in the performing arts.

On Friday, Sept. 26, it will be an A Capella Friday, as the San Miguel Chorale fills the mall with folk and pop music for unaccompanied voices. Conductor Jonathan Velasco will lead this performance. On the following day, Saturday, Sept. 27, the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra with conductor Arnel Feliciano on the baton will serenade mallgoers with Lambingan, a night of love songs through the ages all over the world. All performances will take place at the Second Level Activity Center from 9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The first weekend is capped with a Symphony for Kids, which conductor Arnel Feliciano dedicates to kids through orchestral music featured in animated films and other movies for children. This will take place from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

It will be a tribute to the Oktoberfest on Saturday, Oct. 4. Waltzes, polkas, marches by Strauss and other German composers played by the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Arnel Feliciano will liven up the mall crowd. This will take place at the Second Level Activity Center from 9:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Highlighting the festivities will be The Music of Ryan Cayabyab on Sunday, Oct. 5 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Songs of the multi-awarded composer arranged for the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchetra and the San Miguel Philharmonic•Choir, will be performed with the maestro himself Ryan Cayabyab as the conductor.

The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale were conceptualized and put together by the San Miguel Foundation for the Performing Arts in aid of the company's support for the arts.

The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra's repertoire spans centuries of diverse music. Its special classical concerts last year accompanying young and highly acclaimed pianists were highly applauded. These included Alexandro Tharaud in Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major; Cecile Licad in Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3; and Albert Tiu in Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor.

The San Miguel Master Chorale, on the other hand, has participated in three international music festivals: the 27th International Bamboo Organ Festival, the Taipei International Chorale Festival, and the Jeonju Sound Festival. Organized in November 2000, its critically acclaimed solo concert, Landscapes, was held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The San Miguel Music Festival is one of the many exciting activities of The Podium.

THE San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and The San Miguel Master Chorale will be playing at the Podium.

Panasonic Scholarship for Master's Courses in Japan

2004 PANASONIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR MASTER'S COURSE

Shown in photo from left: Toshinobu Saito, president of Panasonic Scholarship Inc., Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. Ltd (Japan); K. Kimiya, director, Japan Information and Cultural Center, Japan Embassy; Mark Ismael Boyonas, a graduate of Industrial Engineering at UP Diliman; Melvin Jeffrey Chan, a graduate of Manufacturing Engineering and Management at De La Salle University and Andrea Teran, a graduate of Environmental Science at Ateneo de Manila University; Fe Hidalgo, Department of Education Undersecretary for programs and projects; Yukiharu Kubota, president of Matsushita Electric Phils. Corp., chair of Panasonic Scholarship Office - Phils. The scholars will do research and complete master's degrees in natural sciences and engineering in Japanese universities. They will stay in Japan for three years and are expected to help promote good relations among Asian countries and contribute to the development of their country when they return.

Landco Pacific's Leisure Farms 88% sold

PROPERTY developer Landco Pacific makes another breakthrough, selling 88 percent of Phase I and II of its first farm project, Leisure Farms in Metro Tagaytay.

In response to the growing demand for the product, Leisure Farms has expanded their Lemery site, adding yet another cluster of lots - Phase III: The Ridge - located on the higher levels of the farm neighborhood.

"The terrain and slope of our new lots are practically prefect," says Alfred Xerez - Burgos III, VP and group head of the project. And because of Phase III's height, "residents get a better view of Mt. Batulao. We call that area the cream of the crop." "We expect it to sell just as fast as our first two phases," he added.

"The project's success proves that there is indeed a huge longing for people in their 40s to return to simple, basic living, away from the madness of corporate and professional life," Burgos stressed. The project enables city workers to experience a different kind of lifestyle, with a different place to go on weekends, far away from malls and the stuffy city.

Leisure Farms is the country's first hobby farming and agro-tourism community, combining residential farming and resort features in one refreshing package. Located in 116 hectares of breezy, rolling terrain and porous, abundant soil in Metro Tagaytay, the project's farmlots are divided into 1000 - 1500 sqm lots. Farmers enjoy a splendid view of Mt. Batulao and Balayan Bay. To discover more, call 807-8754 loc. 375 or visit their website at www.leisurefarms.com.

SUPPORTED BY:

WOMEN-LEADERS JOIN FORCES TO STAGE DESIGN BUILD 2003

Design Build 2003 will unfold on Sept. 25 to 28 at The PICC Forum. In photo are (seated from left) Agnes Escalante, president of Convex International, event organizer; Lilibeth Legasto, president of Women in Construction (WIC) Foundation; and Ellen Chua, president of the Association of Concrete and Asphalt Producers of the Philippines (Acapp). Standing (from left) are Lily Pio Roda, president of the Construction project Management Association of the Philippines (CPMAP); Leticia Elegado, WIC member; and Connie Castillo, WIC member.

GMA SPONSORS PR CONGRESS

The Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) has tapped GMA Network Inc. as minor sponsor for the 11th National Public Relations Congress to be held on Sept. 24 to 26 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. With the theme 'Building Relationships for a Better World', the event brings together PR professionals, experts and advocates representing various industries and sectors in exploring revolutionary possibilities in the practice of public relations. Shown during the sponsorship agreement signing are (seated from left) PRSP congress chair and Globe Telecom public relations head Jones Campos, APR and GMA Network Inc. vice president for public affairs Carmencita Arce, who is also the PRSP secretary. Looking on is PRSP adviser Evelyn del Rosario, APR of PLDT.

Footworx-Sta. Lucia is 4th All KDA Karate Champion

FOOTWORX-Sta. Lucia emerged as overall champion of the recently concluded 4th All KDA Karate Championships held at the Moro Lorenzo Sports Complex, Ateneo de Manila University. Footworx-Sta. Lucia garnered 7 gold, 1 silver and 5 bronze medals in the kata event; and 4 gold, 3 silver and 3 bronze medals in the kumite event.

Footworx-Sta. Lucia, located at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta, prevailed over Bramante Fitness Center and Unilever Philippines, which were first and second runners-up, respectively. The Karate Development Arts and Sports (KDA) has 20 clubs located in Manila, Makati, Quezon City, Muntinlupa, San Juan, Pasig and Rizal.

Three Footworx-Sta. Lucia karatekas, Elaine Robles, Rhea Madrid and Jhustine Rala, brought home double golds for ruling their respective female kata and kumite events. Robles topped the 14-15 yrs. old category while Madrid bested the 11-13 yrs. old category. Rala prevailed in the 8-10 yrs. old category.

Contributing to Footworx's medal haul were Darren Madrid who won the gold in the male kata and a silver in the male kumite for the 8-10 yrs. old category. Takashi Saito won the gold in the male kumite and a bronze in the male kata for the same age category. Neophyte John Angelo Gerard Calbario won the gold in male kata event for the 7 yrs. old and below category and a bronze in the male kumite for the same age category. Fellow greenhorns Reden Cuden won the gold in the male yellow kata for the 8-10 yrs. old and Paula Joy Bernas won the gold in the 7 yrs. old and below female yellow kata and a bronze in the female kumite.

Kenneth Miguel garnered two silver medals in the 16-17 yrs. old male kata/kumite events to add to Footworx's haul. Sharmaine Manalansan harvested a silver in the female kumite and a bronze in the female kata for 8-10 yrs. old while Ralph Gamboa reaped a bronze in the male kata for 14-15 yrs. old. Kevin Pryce Miguel won a bronze in the male kumite for 8-10 yrs. old. Patrick Vicerra and Nikkolo Narva won a bronze each for the male kata for 11-13 yrs. old.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

SAGOT KITA SAGOT KA NG PURINA TV 1ST YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The Purina Team visited Animal Products Development Center (APDC) to present their utmost appreciation to the agency and their staffs for being part of the TV program. Purina also donated a power sprayer to APDC which they can use on their seminars. You can watch 'Sagot Kita Sagot Ka Ng Purina' every Sunday, 10:30-11:00 am at IBC 13. In photo - Dr. Corazon Maza (APDC head), Dr.Angel Guno (APDC staff), Dr. Jayvee Ovejera and Dr. Jonathan Supnet of Purina.

A GOOD TIME WITH CANVAS

Kafecionado Coffee Bar recently launched a 3-man show featuring paintings of young, award-winning artists Eugenio Cubillo II, Sam Penaso and Cecil Go. The exhibit entitled 'Good Time' showcases the artists diversified perceptions and interpretations on how to celebrate life - through themes ranging from courtship, to idle moments of reflection, to worldly pleasures and to their innermost thoughts and daydreams. The exhibit is ongoing until Sept. 27 at Kafecionado Coffee Bar located at Cityland 3, 105 Herrera St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. For inquiries and reservations call 867-1322. In photo are the young artists Cecil Go, left, and Eugene Cubillo II.

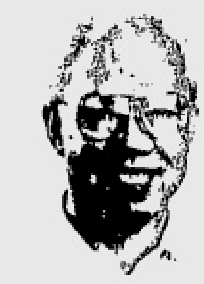
Bits Clips

Cebu Pacific promo

HERE'S good news to all the members of Summit Club, Cebu Pacific's frequent flyer program. In celebration of Summit Club's 3rd anniversary, Cebu Pacific tied-up with The Travel Club to bring an exciting promo. On going until Sept. 25, the promo gives Summit Club members a chance to win special prizes from The Travel Club. Each one-way flown revenue ticket entitles Summit Club members to one raffle entry. So hurry and take the advantage of this promo.

Arellano High '48 to elect new officers

MEMBERS of AHS Class of 1948 will elect their new set of officers for the FY 2003-04 at a luncheon meeting on Sunday, Sept. 28 at the Roof Garden of the Hernandez Bldg. located at 154 Katipunan Ave., Quezon City. The affair will also serve as a welcome party for outgoing class president Bienvenido Pangilinan who just returned home after a six-month stay in Toronto, Canada. Interested parties may contact any of the following: Taling Javier (419-7330); Ludy Espinosa Tesalona (801-9774); Lettie Gimena (781-2213) or Severino Luz (564-0694); and class adviser former Cong. Martin Isidro (254-3906).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SCA HYGIENE PRODUCTS CORP

SCA HYGIENE, ASIANLIFE AND GRA CONTRACT SIGNING

SCA Hygiene Products Corp., makers of Softee and Libresse, appoints AsianLife and General Assurance Corp. as their insurer in providing employee benefit programs and Gotuaco del Rosario and Associates (GRA) as its insurance consultant. In photo are (from left) GRA VP Precy G. Banes, AsianLife and general VP Fida B. Marco, AsianLife and general EVP Bobby M. Alfonso, AsianLife and general president and CEO Eulogio A. Mendoza, SCA Hygiene president Dominador M. Magbanua Jr., SCA Hygiene VP Armando A. de Guzman, GRA EVP and CEO Noemisio M. Molina and GRA director Andrew P. Gotuaco.

BUSINESS

Asian export growth pressures Panama

PANAMA CITY—A surge in exports from Asia is putting pressure on the Panama Canal to find ways to move more container ships through the waterway, even before implementing a possible canal expansion slated for 2007.

The number of container ships using the canal, mostly sending manufactured goods from Asia to the US Atlantic seaboard, grew by 12 percent in 2002 year-on-year, Deputy Canal Administrator Ricaurte Vasquez said on Tuesday.

Container ship traffic through the waterway expanded 64 percent during the 1990s.

But the canal, opened by the United States in 1914 and carrying 4 percent of world trade, is reaching capacity and fears losing out to the US intermodal network, which transports Asian goods in containers from California to the Atlantic seaboard by train and truck.

"There is more consumer demand for Asian goods on the east coast of the US while companies are also setting up their distribution centers there," said Vasquez.

More than 80 percent of China's manufactured export goods to the United States travel via the intermodal network, while only 12 percent transit the Panama Canal. *Reuters*

Yen, bad weather could slow Japan's economic recovery

TOKYO—The pace of Japan's nascent economic recovery could temporarily slow as a strengthening yen hits exports and poor summer weather puts a dent in consumer spending, two of the most important drivers of growth.

The yen hit 110.91 to the dollar this week, its highest in three years, raising concern that demand for Japan's exports could be crimped just as major markets show signs of picking up.

And government figures on Wednesday showed that economic activity in Japan declined in July as the coolest summer in a decade kept consumers at home, cutting demand at restaurants, hotels and retailers.

"We are already looking for a contraction in the economy in the coming quarter of about 0.2 percent from the previous one," said Mamoru Yamazaki, chief economist at Barclays Capital Japan.

"But the weather is a one-off event and the trend is not for the economy to get worse. It should return to positive growth in the fourth quarter."

Wednesday's data showed that the all-industries index, which measures business activity across all sectors, fell 1.5 percent in July from June, while the tertiary sector index, a component of the all-industries index covering services, fell 2.5 percent.

Economists had expected falls of 0.4 percent and 0.7 percent respectively.

Data earlier this month showed that Japan's economy grew at the fastest clip in two-and-a-half years in the April-June quarter, recording annualized growth of 3.9 percent, beating the 3.1-percent expansion in the United States in the same period.

Many economists noted that such a growth rate was unlikely to be sustainable, given that the domestic economy remains weak and there are still uncertainties over demand for Japanese goods in the United States, Japan's largest export market.

But the rise in the yen dominated investor thinking, with shares in exporters slipping back because of concerns over their profit outlook.

Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., Japan's third-largest auto maker, slipped 4.9 percent to 1,203 yen, extending the previous session's 5 percent drop following the dollar's slide. *Reuters*

Wall St. reacts to Argentina debt proposal

NEW YORK—Wall Street reacted with disappointment Tuesday to Argentina's request that private creditors write off 75 percent of its $94.3-billion debt.

The US market had expected a less audacious request, analysts said.

US holders of Argentine bonds rejected the move, although they did show willingness to negotiate, hoping the crisis-stricken South American country would show some flexibility.

"The reaction in Wall Street has been very negative," said Carl Ross, an analyst with Bear Sterns.

The market was "surprised" by "the amount of the haircut that Argentina is looking for—75 percent," said Ross.

"I think a lot of people felt maybe 50 to 60 percent would be more in line with the historical experience."

Ross noted that Argentina's initial bargaining position—"not paying the past due interest" worth $14 billion since Argentina's December 2001 default—"is truly a departure from previous norms."

Personally, however, he said he was not very surprised.

"When you analyze the numbers in Argentina what you find is that they cannot pay much more than the debt service implied in the 75-percent debt reduction," Ross added.

Eck Capital director Roberto Krutiansky, a member of the Argentina Bondholders Committee, said if the move was the start of negotiations it would be a welcome one, but a "take-it-or-leave-it" offer would not gell.

"It would be better if Argentina negotiated instead of adopting a hardline position," Krutiansky said, saying he would prefer not to impose tough measures such as litigation against the country.

The process of renegotiating Argentina's debt in default will be complex.

This is because 152 bonds exist in eight different legal frameworks, including those of the United States, Japan and Germany.

Walter Molano, director of BCP Securities, said Argentine Economy Minister Roberto Lavagna's proposal Monday in Dubai on the sidelines of International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings did not bring greater repercussions.

"The Argentine government wanted to cool the euphoria in the marketplace, but it also wanted to create a floor for expectations," said Molano.

"In other words, the maximum haircut Argentina will demand will be 75 percent, creating a floor for Argentine bond prices." *AFP*

A NEW landmark, the Taipei 101, towers over its neighbors in Taipei on Sept. 18. The 508-meter skyscraper is expected to replace Malaysia's Petronas Towers as the world's tallest building in early October. REUTERS

World's tallest building in Taipei to withstand typhoons, quakes

TAIPEI—Faced with devastating earthquakes, raging typhoons and a decade-long property slump, Taiwan knew it needed more than the usual dose of luck to build the world's tallest skyscraper.

So as soon as architects finished a draft design for the 508-meter Taipei 101—which is expected to replace Malaysia's Petronas Towers as the earth's tallest building in October—developer Harace Lin sent for a feng shui master.

"We wanted to avoid making any mistakes," said Lin, president of Taipei Financial Center Corp., a consortium of the island's leading banks and insurance companies that helped bankroll the $1.7 billion tower.

"To Chinese people, Yin Yang, the Five Elements, and the Eight Diagrams are very important," Lin said, referring to terms used in the ancient Chinese art of deciphering hidden energy in the positioning of objects, buildings and furniture.

Luckily for architects at C Y Lee and Associates, the geomancy expert largely approved of their design for a 101-story tower of steel, concrete and glass that will house a shopping mall, offices for 12,000 people, and the Taiwan Stock Exchange.

The gleaming skyscraper is meant to resemble a bamboo stalk, known for its sturdiness and vigor.

Although Taipei 101 will not be entirely finished until November 2004, the tower is already four times as tall as its nearest neighbors and dominates Taipei's skyline of mostly low-rise grey concrete blocks.

Taiwan hopes the landmark will draw foreign companies to its capital, which has less than 10 buildings more than 100 meters tall.

Analysts, however, say no single building can prevent Taiwan's depressed property market from being upstaged by China. *Reuters*

Asian stocks give up gains, yen retreats

SINGAPORE—Asian share markets gave up sharp gains on Wednesday as buying of techs and defensive stocks gave way to selling of dollar-earning exporters, but concern over possible Bank of Japan intervention kept the strong yen in check.

Having slipped to a low of 110.91 yen on Tuesday, a holiday in Japan, the dollar was trading around 112.10 yen.

Against the euro the yen was worth 128.35, while the euro bought $1.1449.

Sankyo Co. Ltd. and other Japanese drug makers soared on the final day to gain rights to their half-year dividends, while oil issues, such as Nippon Oil Corp., rose on the firm yen.

"Investors are putting money into defensive issues to get their dividends and are also covering shorts in the electronics and drug sectors following Monday's massive fall," said Hiroaki Kuramochi, head of global equities at Credit Lyonnais.

Japan's Nikkei average was up 0.04 percent to end the morning at 10,479.35 after having gained more than 1.7 percent earlier. MSCI's dollar-based index of Asian stock markets outside of Japan edged up 0.21 percent.

US stocks rose on Tuesday, as investors nibbled at technology stocks, pushing the Dow Jones industrial average 0.43 percent higher to 9,576.04, the broader Standard & Poor's 500 Index up 0.61 percent, and the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index 1.45 percent higher.

Australian stocks rose on the US gains that gave News Corp. a strong start, but were capped by worries about the local currency strength. *Reuters*

South Korea sees $10B in foreign investments

SEOUL—South Korea's commerce minister said on Wednesday foreign direct investment would nearly double next year, driven by an economic recovery and also government efforts to entice foreign investors.

The country has been losing its attractiveness as a venue for foreign investment in recent years mainly on concerns over its militant trade unions, the crisis over North Korea's nuclear ambitions and China's rise as a regional industrial powerhouse.

"We expect FDI will rise to about $10 billion in 2004, up from an estimated $5-$6 billion in 2003, as the economy is expected to recover from late this year and due to our efforts to create a better environment for foreign investment," Yoon Jin-sik told Reuters after making a speech to a group of foreign business leaders invited to check out investment opportunities.

With a sharp slide in foreign investment threatening to derail the country's ambitions of becoming a business hub for North Asia, South Korea said this month it would offer cash grants and other incentives to try to win back overseas money and support flagging growth in Asia's fourth-largest economy.

"Aside from arranging a seminar for foreign investors in the country, we also plan to send delegations to them in their countries to explain what we can offer," Yoon said.

He said he would lead a delegation to Japan in October to attract investors in the sectors of high-tech components and materials to South Korea.

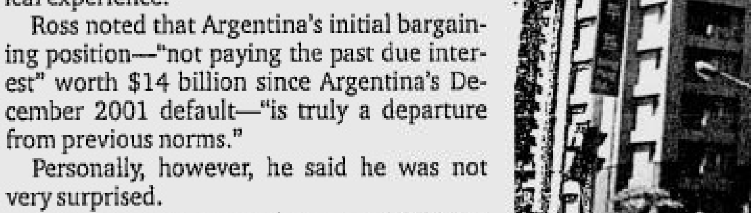
Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the first half of 2003, measured by investment plans submitted to the government, fell 44 percent from a year earlier to $2.7 billion.

FDI has been falling since it hit a peak of $15.5 billion in 1999, according to the ministry's data.

Touching on the won's recent steep rise, the minister said it was unclear whether the won currency's surge would continue.

"We'll wait a little bit more until we have a clearer picture of the currency market," Yoon said.

The minister said a clearer currency trend was necessary before analyzing the impact on exporters and overall economic policy. *Reuters*



JOHN Ridding, editor and publisher of the Financial Times Asia, holds up an edition of the paper as he speaks about the launch of the new Asian edition with the press at their offices in Hong Kong. The Financial Times business newspaper launched a new Asian edition, Sept. 22, going head to head with the long-established Asian edition of the rival Wall Street Journal. AFP

Fed chiefs see US economy on the rise

WASHINGTON—The US economy is poised for solid growth, two top Federal Reserve officials said on Tuesday, although one warned that the recovery's inability to create jobs posed a risk to the outlook.

"There is every reason to expect this expansion that we've got going now will get stronger," Dallas Federal Reserve Bank President Robert McTeer said at a luncheon sponsored by the Rotary Club of Honolulu.

"Hopefully before long it will be strong enough to start cutting into the unemployment rate."

Separately, Richmond Fed chief Alfred Broaddus told a meeting of the Southern Governors' Association in Charleston, West Virginia, that consensus forecasts for a solid 4-percent economic expansion next year seemed the most likely outcome.

However, Broaddus struck a more downbeat tone than his colleague McTeer by stressing that the US economy was not necessarily out of the woods.

"I think the consensus projection is the most likely outcome but a weaker performance cannot be ruled out as long as job conditions are soft," Broaddus said.

"By far the biggest downside risk ... is the current weak jobs market and the prospect, the possibility that it will remain weak in the months ahead," he added, saying such an outcome could undercut consumer spending.

The US economy shed 93,000 jobs in August, the seventh straight month of declining employment.

Broaddus also warned of the potential for an unwanted downward drift in already-low inflation, reinforcing a message delivered a day earlier in a speech by Fed Governor Ben Bernanke and underscoring the Fed's belief that interest rates can keep down for a considerable period.

At their last meeting on Sept. 16, Fed officials held overnight interest rates steady at a 45-year low of 1 percent as they repeated a caution over a minor risk that inflation could move "undesirably" low.

Fed officials are concerned they could face a hard time boosting the economy in the event of an unforeseen shock, such as a terror attack, if inflation were too low.

Broaddus said he saw a risk the longer-term trend of growth in productivity, or worker output per hour, could accelerate, making it tougher to lower the unemployment rate and reduce excess industrial capacity. *Reuters*

MOTORING

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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

THE RETURNING BMW 6-Series Coupé

2 BMWs set to spice up next year's auto market

By Charles E. Buban

ONE is getting back in the game while the other is yet to make a mark.

Two distinct models from BMW were unveiled last week during the 60th International Motor Show (IAA) for Passenger Cars held in Frankfurt, Germany.

Held every two years, the largest automotive exhibition in the world welcomed the 2004 6 Series coupé and the new X3—two models which will be part of the German automotive giant's offensive next year.

"It sure is exciting to hear BMW continuing the tradition of the company's luxury coupés while at the same time introducing a new member in its X-family," informed Lito German, BMW Group Philippines corporate communications manager.

15-year absence

After an absence of nearly 15-years, the 6 Series coupé returns with an all-new look and a whole lot more muscle.

While paying homage to the original 6-Series design, this new model will be completely modern, featuring an all-aluminum chassis, suspension components, thermoplastic fenders and composite rear trunk lid, contributing to its outstanding driving comfort and high level of agility.

It will be powered by a 4.4-liter, 32-valve, Valvetronic V-8 engine that delivers 325 horsepower, which can propel this big coupé to 100 kph in less than six seconds, according to BMW.

The 2004 6 Series coupé has different transmissions to choose from: 6-speed manual, 6-speed Steptronic automatic, or 6-speed Sequential Manual Gearbox featuring both a gearshift lever and shift paddles on the steering wheel, like in Formula One race cars.

BMW X3: the first premium sports activity vehicle below the X5 to enter the market

The 645i will feature lots of gizmos, too. Among these are:

- Active roll stabilization to diminish body sway during hard cornering
- An optional active steering system that gives precise road feel
- Active headlights that turn with the curve of the road
- A head-up display that projects vehicle information onto the windshield
- Active cruise control that automatically maintains a preset distance from approaching cars.

No ordinary SUV

Although the X3 is considered a downsized version of the X5, this latest BMW sports utility vehicle is no pushover.

A special highlight of this compact-sized SUV is its all-new xDrive intelligent all-wheel-drive system, which sets new standards in agility for all-wheel-drive vehicles, according to BMW.

With the xDrive, it immediately recognizes any need for a change in power distribution and responds very quickly when driving on the road, often before the wheels begin to lose their grip.

BMW explained that sensors tell it to feed the optimum drive force to any wheel to significantly cut understeer and oversteer.

In combination

Dynamic Stability Control (DSC) complements the xDrive by working on individual wheels, intervening when one starts to slip.

In these cases, DSC cuts power to the affected wheel and, where necessary, also applies the brakes, according to BMW.

In addition to xDrive and DSC, the X3 (like the X5) will also have Hill Descent Control (HDC) to limit down-hill speed when descending very steep hills.

BMW will offer two variants: the X3 2.5i, with a 2.5-liter in-line 6 cylinders and a more powerful X3 3.0i, with a 3-liter in-line 6 cylinders. Either will be available with a six-speed manual gearbox or five-speed Steptronic automatic transmission.

"The price for these two is yet to be determined," revealed German. "But definitely, they will be in the market by next year."

Peugeot arrives in style

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

WHEN it comes to style and flair, you can't beat the French. France's *joie de vivre* was on display once again last week when three cars bearing the French marque Peugeot were launched at the Fort Bonifacio Global City in a continental outdoorsy ambience, complete with pitched white tents, buffet tables offering French wine and aperitifs and background music featuring the best of the late great chanteuse Edith Piaf. The occasion was graced by French Ambassador Mme. Renee Veyret, Taguig Mayor Sigfrido Tinga (since the launch venue was inside Taguig's borders) and Le Club (French Business Association in the Philippines) veep Jean-Pierre Etroit.

Mais attendez! Peugeot cars are not only stylish, they are tres dynamic and durable also, as proven by Peugeot's performance in car rallies and endurance trials. For the past three years, the Peugeot 206 World Rally Car has been the World Rally Champion. Small wonder the 206 hatchback was Europe's best-selling car in 2002 and three million units have been sold around the world.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPION. The 206's racing predecessor, the 205 Turbo 16, first won the World Rally Championship two years in a row, in 1985 and 1986. Peugeot followed this up with victories in the grueling Paris-Dakar rally, the 24-Hours of Le Mans race and Pikes Peak. Even before World War II, Peugeot cars were already making headlines in motor sports by placing first in the Indianapolis Grand Prix and the Monte Carlo rally. In 1961, Peugeot signaled its successful return to motor sports by winning the East African Safari Rally and in 2000, the Peugeot 206 began its three-year domination of the World Rally Championship.

Come to think of it, German cars are more famous than French cars for sturdiness and advanced technology. So how come they haven't won as many endurance races as a French car like Peugeot?

Speaking of automotive technology, Peugeot is no slouch in this area, either. As I mentioned in a previous column ("A Lion's Racing Pedigree," April 24, 2003), Peugeot invented the 16-valve, DOHC engine 83 years ago. In 1912, Peugeot produced its first Grand Prix car with an engine using a hemispherical combustion chamber with cross-flow head and four valves per cylinder driven by twin overhead camshafts. This Peugeot went on to win the French Grand Prix and the Indianapolis American Grand Prix the following year.

206, 307 AND 206 CC. Now the World Rally-tested Peugeot 206 hatchback has landed in Manila together with the medium-size 307, which was voted Car of the Year for 2002 by 55 motoring journalists from 21 European nations, and the gorgeous 206 Coupé Cabriolet, the world's first passenger car with a retractable roof. Peugeot cars will be exclusively distributed here by AutoFrance Philippines Inc., the president and managing director of which are Valentin Torres Jr. and Marjorie Lee, respectively.

Guests at the Peugeot media launch were given a chance to test-drive the 206 or the 307 on a blocked-off circuit bounded by 30th Street, 31st Street and 3rd Avenue. With a Roadwise marshal seated on the front seat acting as guide, I got to test-drive the 307 over a series of wooden rails, a stretch of chicane, under a lights stimulation tent and under a wiper stimulation tent. The tame, all-too-brief test drive showcased a teeny weeny bit of the 307's cutting-edge technology such as its Triptronic System Porsche automatic transmission, its sporty responsiveness, superb handling, riding comfort and classy ergonomics (a refrigerated glove box, for one.) But it left me eager for more time behind the steering wheel on an open road. How else can one check out the 307's road-holding characteristics at its vaunted top speed of 186 kph and adequately exercise the 1.6-liter, 16-valve engine capable of 127 HP at 5,800 rpm and max torque of 147 Nm at 4,000 rpm? Not to mention finding out why the 206 is Europe's top-selling car.

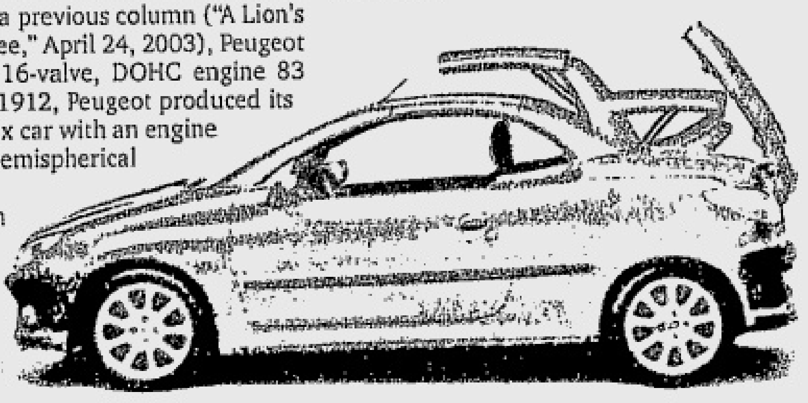
Hope Monsieur Torres and Mademoiselle Lee get the hint.

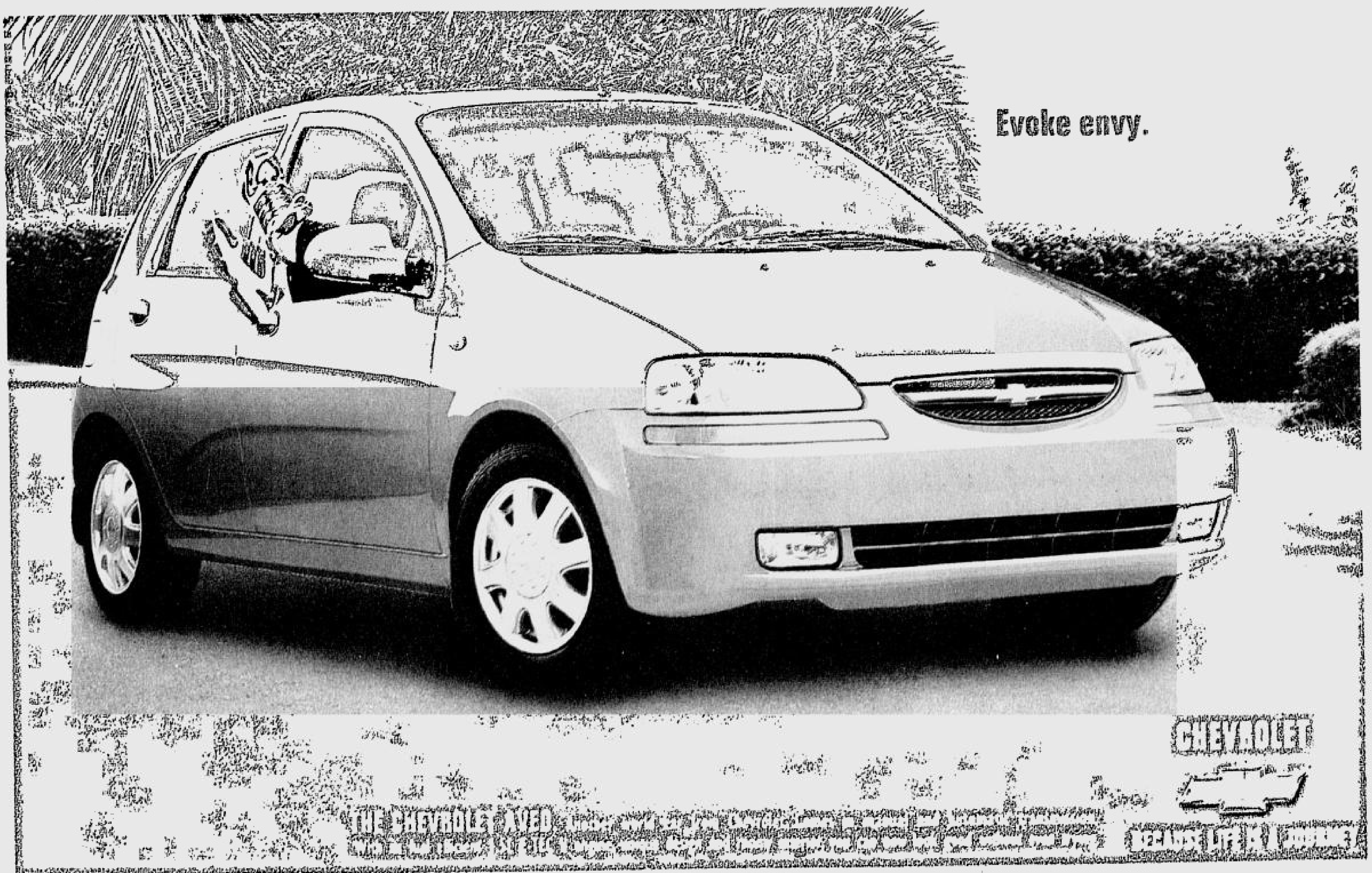
* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Success is a journey, not a destination.

* * *

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.)





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See the Chevrolet Aveo at

Everest passengers, e

Text and photos
by Tessa R. Salazar

(Second of three parts)

THE EVEREST ride-and-drive started from the Auto Alliance of Thailand plant, to a lunch stop at the seafood restaurant Ruamtalae beside the scenic MaePim beach. The 159-km route would eventually lead to Koh Chang Pier.

The route to Koh Chang—translated as Elephant Island because of its shape—was well-paved and occasionally slippery. Like a long, undulating snake, the narrow road could barely fit two averaged-sized vehicles. The winding passes remind me of our own Dalton Pass.

Largely undeveloped Koh Chang boasts of pristine beaches, and has earned the title "the last paradise island in Southeast Asia." Readers must forgive me if I beg to disagree on this moniker. I myself could name at least five "last paradise islands in Southeast Asia" in our own country.

But putting our sense of "paradise island patriotism" aside, we motoring journalists from Indonesia, India, Brunei, Cambodia, Philippines and host Thailand basked in the Koh Chang sun, and went sailing on a sunset cruise to the Koh Chang Pier. We stayed for the night at the seaside Aiyapura Hotel.

Rough roads ahead

The next day, we resumed driving the Everest. The CB radios kept warning us of the rough roads ahead, and that only experienced drivers could be skilled enough to handle the terrain. But Ford Philippines trained us journalists well. We figured this would be a walk in the park compared to the nightmarish off-road Ford Ranger Pinatubo Expedition a year ago. What could be worse than being winched up a narrow 45-degree slope beside a 70-foot ravine?

THE A/T Everest on 'P'

The automatic transmission Everest we were driving seemed equally at home with the road as with its manual counterpart. Early on, I kept on shifting in the "hold" mode, which has three positions: D for the third gear, S for second while L for first. The D on the "hold off" range has all four forward ratios plus torque converter lockup. The S has first three forward ratios available, while the L (low) has first and second gear ratios available.

The technicians explained later that the "Hold On," from a dead stop, has a D that starts in second gear and the transaxle is held on the third. The S starts in second gear and stays in second gear while the L gear shifter lets the vehicle stay in first gear.

With all that technobabble in mind, I found out that the trail we got into could be traversed using the "D" shift only. I was on "D" for most of the uphill trek and it was, indeed, enough. And the handling was swift. The engine—a 2.5-liter diesel water intercooled engine—is a show-off and would occasionally rev on its own, as if assuring us that it had incorporated an intercooler for increased power, indirect fuel injection and reduced turbo lag.

Another Everest variant that our other colleagues had been test-driving was the 2.6-liter petrol EGI engine, constructed with three valves per cylinder. It delivers 90kW at 4,500 RPM and 206Nm at 3,500 RPM. The ride comfort made my passengers sleep off at the rough sections.

Having a hard time

Some journalists, I observed, were having a hard time shifting on the M/T on the uphill trails. They explained later that they were not used to driving M/Ts anymore.

All the Everest 4x4 models are equipped with remote free wheel hubs operated from inside the vehicle with a switch on the instrument panel. The function of the RFW is to disconnect the front differential and propeller shaft from the front wheels when the vehicle is in two-wheel drive mode.

This is designed to minimize drivetrain wear and improve fuel economy.

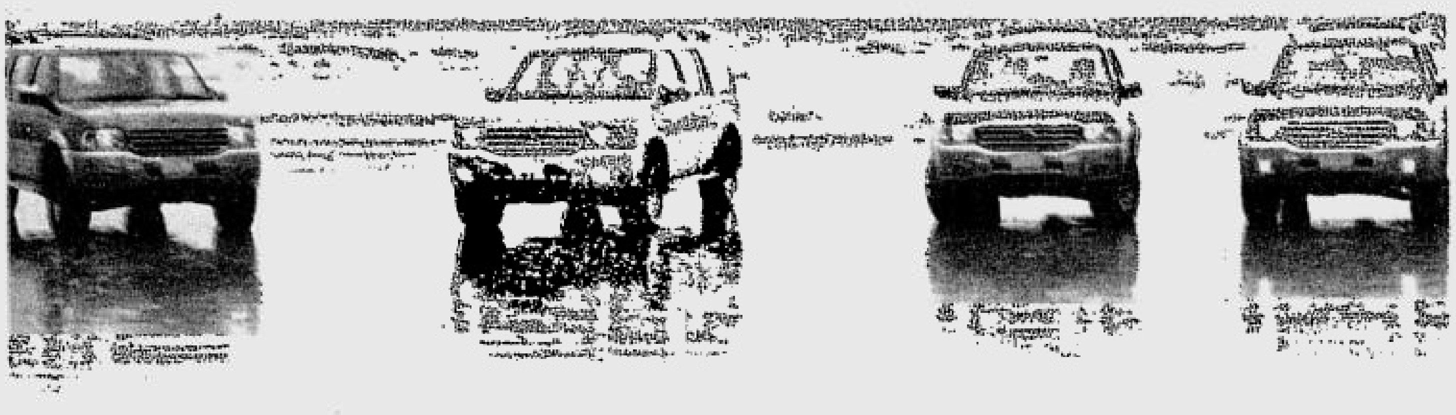
Koh Chang villages, as we would view occasionally during our drive, were u
built over the sea.

But aside from small communitic
out occasionally here and there, Ko
is covered in thick rain forest can
forest supports a wide range of wild

Koh Chang locals note 29 d
species of mammals, including the
tailed Macaque, Barking Deer, Wild
van Mongoose and Silver Languor.
species including the Nightjar, Pacit

Count the Everest in as a new subspecies.' The Everest was built to be the trailblazer in jungles and forests

THE EVEREST bids goodbye to the Elephant Island.



BUILT to be trailblazers in junglesm forests and beaches

Quality paramount at NLE; PAL goes back to KL

From page C4

Kuala Lumpur again on Oct. 26. Flights will be four times a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday).

As we all know, the Malaysian capital has become a virtual tourist destination, what with the country's booming economy. Ever since the Sepang Speedway circuit opened in Kuala Lumpur some years back, Kuala Lumpur has steadily drawn large Formula 1 crowds not only from around the world but also from the Philippines. Boeing 737-300 aircraft, with 12 Mabuhay (business) class and 102 economy class seats, will be deployed on the route.

The flights, suspended in June 1998 after they started in April 1977, are expected to further boost two-way traffic between the Philippines and Malaysia, which has declined in recent years.

* * *

Volvo has not stopped enticing its customers to buy what the world knows as the safest automobile. Its come-on to offer buyers the chance to win the same model they bought through a raffle has become a rage that most car companies continue to wonder how Volvo is making money out of this ambitious project.

Look, when you buy any of Volvo's models—S40, V40, S60, V70, S80 or XC70—from authorized Volvo dealers Viking Cars Inc. and Celestra Motors, you get the chance to win another Volvo of the same model in a raffle called "Grand Winner Takes Another."

Now if you don't want another Volvo, you can claim its cash equivalent. Isn't that a steal?

Volvo car purchases from June 2 to Aug. 1, 2003 are entitled to two raffle coupons while purchases from Aug. 2 to Oct. 2, 2003, are entitled to one raffle coupon. So the sooner you purchase your Volvo, the greater your chances of winning.

For the raffle's grand prize, you can choose between a 100-percent cash rebate of your newly acquired Volvo or a brand-new Volvo of the same model purchased. The second prize winner gets a 50-percent cash rebate on the brand-new Volvo, while the third prize winner receives a 25-percent cash rebate.

"Grand Winner Takes Another a
to show our appreciation to all ou
customers who share our passion
vo's brand of automotive excelle
safety. This is our way of welcomi
into the Volvo family," said lawyer A
Arcilla, the chief executive officer a
dent of Viking Cars Inc.

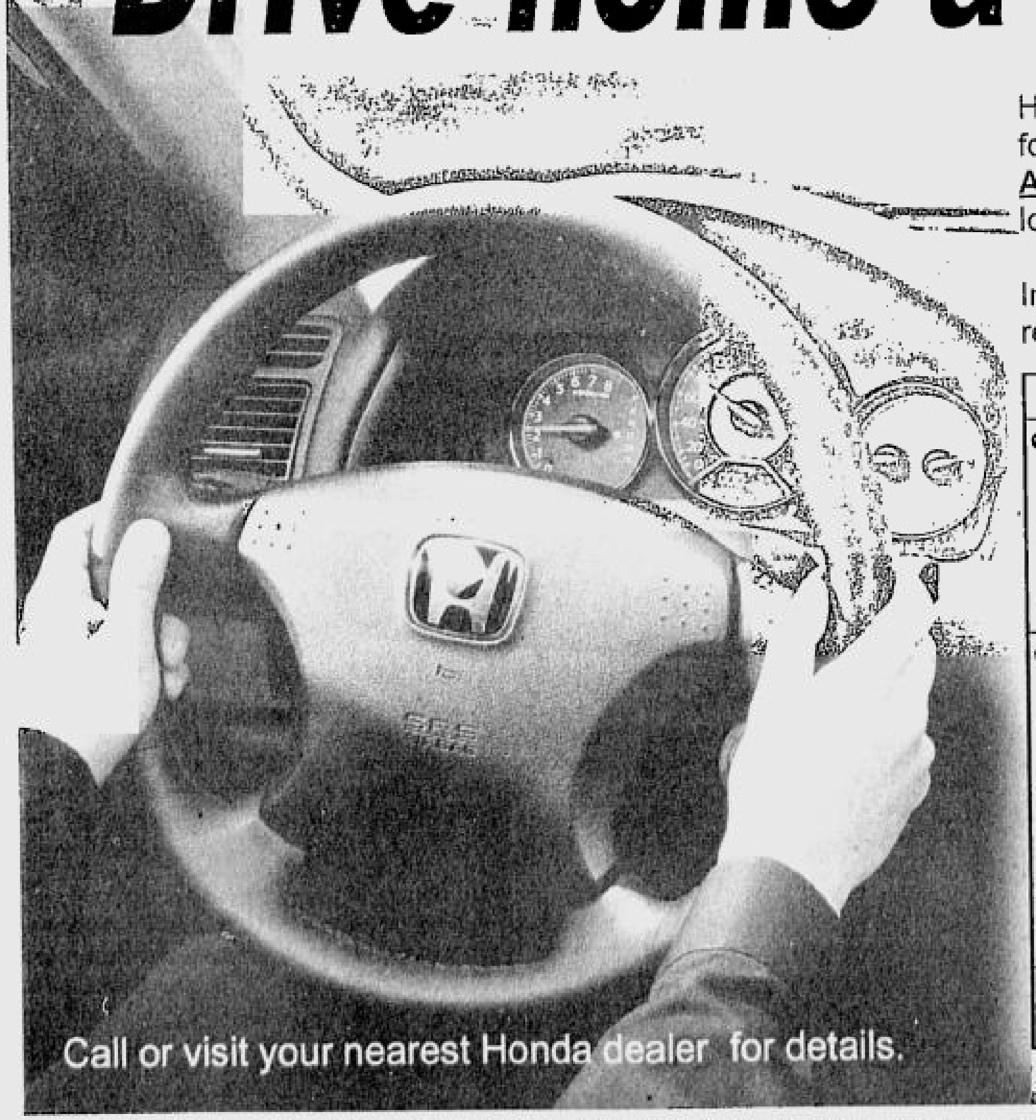
The "Grand Winner Takes Anoth
ject is simultaneous with the "Volvo
ship Package" wherein clients a
flexible payment terms from zero

Drive home a new Honda now!

Honda extends its gratitude to her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for signing into law Republic Act 9224, An Act Rationalizing the Excise Tax on Automobiles, and to Congress for the passage of the Bill. RA 9224 will result to the lowering of prices for passenger cars like the Civic, Accord and City.

In anticipation of the full implementation of RA 9224, Honda announces the adjusted retail prices of the following Honda automobiles:

Model	Variant	Old Price	New Price
City	1.3 A MT	P539,000	P499,000
	1.3 S MT	P569,000	P539,000
	1.3 S CVT	P609,000	P579,000
	1.3 S MT w/ ABS/SRS	P619,000	P579,000
	1.3 S CVT w/ ABS/SRS	P659,000	P619,000
Civic	1.5 LXi MT	P718,000	P660,000
	1.5 LXi AT	P748,000	P690,000
	1.6 VTi MT	P780,000	P710,000
	1.6 VTi AT	P815,000	P745,000
	1.6 VTi-S MT	P835,000	P760,000
	1.6 VTi-S AT	P870,000	P795,000
	1.6 VTi-S MT (leather)	P894,000	P800,000
	1.6 VTi-S AT (leather)	P929,000	P835,000
Accord	2.0 VTi AT	P1,280,000	P1,080,000
	2.0 VTi-L AT	P1,398,000	P1,220,000



Call or visit your nearest Honda dealer for details.

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low, Yellow Vented Bulbul and Oriental Pied Hornbill. About 42 different species of amphibians and reptiles could be found, including python, turtles, monitor lizards, the ubiquitous Gecko and the vocal Koh Chang frog.

New 'subspecies'

Count the Everest in as a new "subspecies." The Everest was built to be the trailblazer in jungles and forests, depending on how far inside the forest brave daddies were willing to take their wives and small kids. Of course, when drivers bite off more than the Everest can chew and become stuck or lost in the woods, auxiliary power points on front for cell phones, laptop, removable GPS system and other electronic equipment are available to get them back on track.

In the cargo area, there are also powerpoints for cellphones, handheld electronic games for camping and recreational items such as 12V powered refrigerator, water heater, stereo, camping stoves, emergency lights, you name it. Worth noting also are front seat back map pockets with additional cell phone size stowage pockets on each front seat back. Our third row seat, meanwhile, had been folded flat for our luggage.

In peak seasons, all of Koh Chang's beaches are fine places to swim. This time, we made Everest units frolic on the beachfront (sans the bathing suits, of course), occasionally flooring the pedals on sand and sea. Sand driving displayed another facet of Everest's drive abilities.

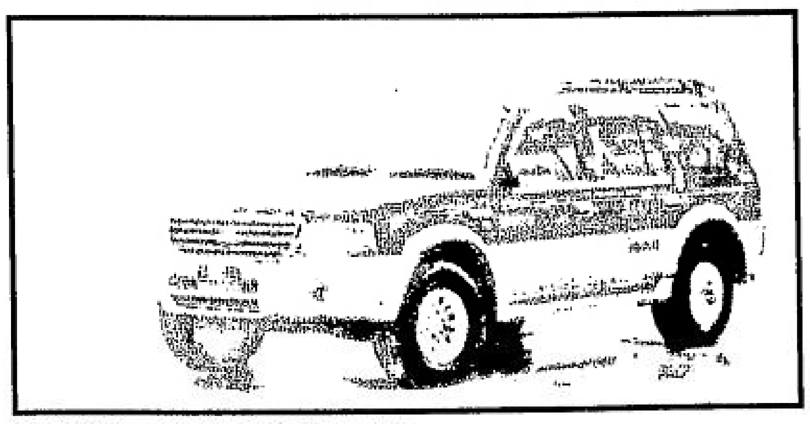
After a sumptuous lunch at the Fishermen's village, the expedition continued. After the ferry back to the mainland, we drove a good 123 km to Chanthaburi then to Rayong City, finally making a pit stop and early dinner at wood-inspired S. Benjapand restaurant.

Great views of the road

From the restaurant, we reset our trip meters and entered route 3, filled up our tanks and entered the motorways. At this time heavy rains started. But the Everest ran steady even on flooded roads and poor visibility. The Everest's high ride height (1835mm with 15-inch alloy wheels and 265/70R15 tires) and multireflector headlamps and clear combination lamps provide great views of the road in any weather.

Another confidence booster is the dual caliper ventilated front disc brakes, rear drum disc brakes with trailing shoe system and a load sensing valve to control rear brake pressure levels (plus four-wheel anti lock braking system).

We set foot (and rubber) on Bangkok nearly at midnight and everyone prepared for the next day's flight back home to their home countries.



BASKING under the Koh Chang sun

Except me. No, I did not decide to go "TNT" in Thailand. But I had another motoring event to catch three days later. Ford wouldn't leave me alone though, thankfully, and loaned one A/T Everest for me to drive around the city.

As Ford "moved mountains" on the beaches of Thailand with its Everest, I set myself to an equally formidable task in the days ahead: moving a "mountain" of a vehicle inside the road jam that is Bangkok. Wish me luck.

(Everest in the city next week)

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* * *

QUOTE ME. Lock your doors the minute you board your car. Car thieves strike when you least expect them to.

EXTREME AUTO BYTES

OW can I put more horsepower into my car?
–Hazel of Mandaluyong

Mass production leads to a lot of compromises in e way your stock engine is constructed. But that al- leaves you a lot of room for improvement perforance-wise. Here's a list of the top 10 things you can to add horsepower to your stock car.

1. **Change your computer chip**—it's no guaran- e but sometimes you can improve your car's perforance just from changing the ROM chip in the en- ne control unit.

2. **Help your engine breathe in more easily**—Air sistance can rob power from your engine so you n try bigger air filters, polished intake manifolds d reduced intake piping.

3. **Help your engine exhale more easily**—In oth- words, find ways to eliminate back pressure in the haust system.

You can rob your engine of power if your exhaust pe is too small or the muffler has too much air resisnce.

4. **Change the heads.**

5. **Change the cams.**—Both these moves help imove airflow in and out of the engine and thus imove power.

6. **Cram more air into your cylinder**—Turchargers and superchargers pressurize the incomg air so you can get more power from the cylinder.

7. **Cool the incoming air**—Many turbocharged d supercharged cars have an intercooler through hich the compressed air passes to cool it off before enters the cylinder.

8. **Keep things light**—Lightweight parts help the gine perform better.

9. **Increase the compression ratio**—Higher comession ratios produce more power, up to a point. ut of course, this could also mean shifting to a fuel ith a higher octane rating.

10. **Increase displacement**—More displacement, hich you can get with bigger cylinders, means more wer because you can burn more gas during each volution of the engine.

But of course, once you start considering No. 10, u might as well consider getting yourself a new gh-performance engine altogether because it might me out cheaper and easier to do in the end.

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Isuzu fuel misers did it again

By Charles E. Buban

AN ISUZU Crosswind (manual transmission) with Ronald Aguto Jr. and Allan Tan as crew members, garnered the best kilometer per liter fuel efficiency at 43.50 km per liter during the recently concluded Isuzu Challenge Manila Leg.

This was the second consecutive year that Isuzu has conducted the economy run and it was the third (first and second were held in Cebu and Isabela) this year.

"We hold this event not only to test our vehicles' fuel efficiency but also to treat our loyal customers nationwide," expressed Isuzu Philippines corporate communications manager Myrna Gonzales.

Underlining Isuzu diesel engine's fuel efficiency was the fact that other Isuzu vehicles also showed remarkable accomplishments.

4 categories

A total of 25 vehicles participated in the event which was categorized into four: Isuzu Crosswind manual and automatic, Isuzu Trooper and Isuzu Fuego manual.

Winners will get to participate in the forthcoming national run to be held in Manila in December.

The Crosswind A/T of Marjorie Wong and Tricia Lim finished with 22.10 km/l efficiency mark. Oscar Nuke and David Aquino finished with 38.83 km/l in their Trooper A/T while Michael Gutierrez and Patrick Gutierrez finished with a 32.84 km/l riding their Fuego M/T.

Winners in the four categories went home with P10,000 cash and prizes from sponsors WG&A Superferry and Samsung Electronics.

Demanding route

The Isuzu Challenge Manila Leg was contested over a demanding route of 83.1 km that took competitors from Isuzu Manila in Paco to the busy South Superhighway and then over a number of twisty highways between Carmona Exit and Shell Station in Naic, Cavite.

From this final point, the diesoline consumptions by the participants were measured and certified by lawyer Guiller Asido of the Philippine Tourism Authority and Catherine Castillo from the Office of the Mayor of Imus, Cavite.

"After all the vehicles have checked in at Shell Naic, all participants proceeded to Caylabne Bay Resort in Ternate, Cavite, for the awarding rites but before that they were treated to an afternoon of fun and games," related Timmy Naval, IPC public relations manager.

IPC executive vice president Kazuhiko Sho, left, and president Toru Koyasu lead the flag off at Isuzu Manila.

SHELL people make sure each tank is filled to the brim.

AFTER AN EXHAUSTING morning drive, participants get to enjoy the water attraction of Caylabne Bay Resort in Ternate, Cavite.

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Quality paramount at NLE; PAL goes back to KL

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

I JUST discovered something of import regarding the ongoing rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway. When completed, hopefully by 2005, the NLE will increase toll to levels that will still be much lower than those being charged now at both the South Luzon Expressway and the Coastal Road going to Cavite.

Do you know that at the NLE, the toll today is 26 centavos per kilometer? It hasn't changed since that was adopted in 1983. I was told that at the SLE today, Citra collects P3.20 per kilometer at grade level; at the Coastal, Renong collects P1.84 per kilometer.

Upon completion of the NLE expansion and rehabilitation, the projected toll is P2.31/km compared to the anticipated P3.79/km by Citra at SLE and P2.82/km by Renong at Coastal Road in 2005.

* * *

I have always believed that quality is expensive. I'm sure that the rehabilitation of the NLE will not be a so-so job, especially because Ping de Jesus' name is at stake here. We all know that Ping, Cory's no-nonsense public works secretary who heads the Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC), is a top-notch professional whose adherence to quality is legend.

When the private sector enters into a partnership with the government, expect some concrete changes happening for the better. The MNTC, the lead arm in the expansion and rehabilitation of the NLE, is a reputable company whose track record is not something to sneeze at.

The North Diversion Road (its old name, remember?) was opened in the '60s. Except for minor repairs happening every now and then, this expressway has not really tasted a genuine repair. Now it's happening. I can't wait to see its completion.

* * *

There's another feather in the cap of Honda Cars Philippines. It just received the Certificate of Approval for Environmental Management System by the Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance. This means Honda has passed strict rules on company site activities, including the manufacture of passenger cars and light commercial vehicles. The award will last up to Oct. 31, 2004.

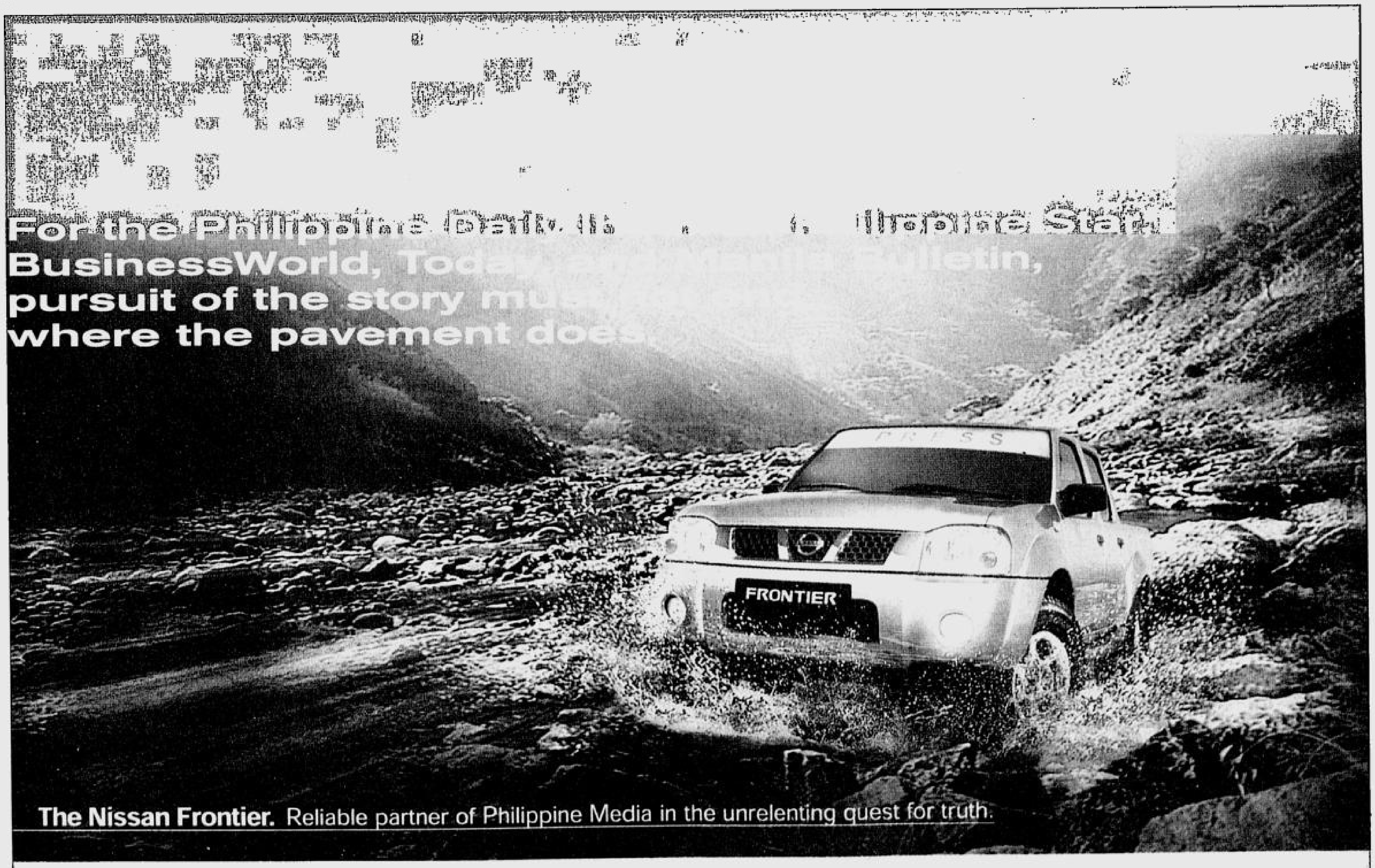
Honda received the environmental award mainly on its multimillion-peso investment on water waste treatment plant, which passed strict international standards. The water used in the plant's manufacturing processes is subject to thorough recycling; it is treated with decontaminating agents to make sure that no harmful elements are released to the environment. Already, the system has been reaping one success after another, including the rapid increase of fish population in the Sta. Rosa, Laguna, area, which uses the treated water for small fishponds.

Also, Honda's Universal Carbonizer Machine helps the car company's environment-friendly efforts by turning solid waste particles into charcoal; they become safe for disposal in the nearby landfill.

* * *

That was a nice move Philippine Airlines did when it decided to resume flying to

QUALITY/ C2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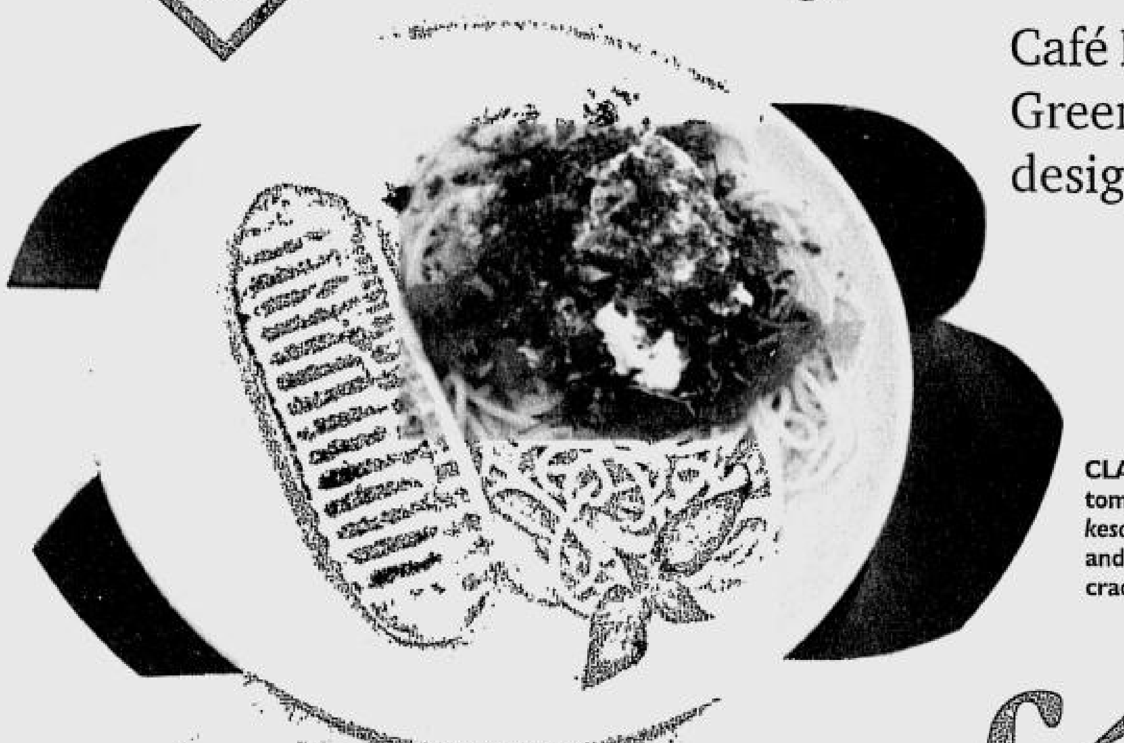

CLASSIC tomato sauce, *kesong puti* and *danggit* crackle

Café Bola's new outlet in Greenbelt 3 offers homey food designed to chase the blues away

Comfort café

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

HEAVY rains usually spell bad business for some restaurants in Greenbelt 3, but not in the case of Café Bola (tels. 7572652/7281997), the newest collaboration between chef and restaurateur Margarita "Gaita" Fores and business partner Alvin Lim.

Despite the raging storm outside, the no-frills café in Greenbelt 3 was packed with a mix of shoppers and denizens of the corporate world, both groups eager to sample a number of Café Bola's "cool comfort food": *adobo* flakes with *kesong puti* on rice, caramelized spam with egg on rice, and naked Ilonggo-style chorizo with egg on rice, to name a few.

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28 (1:30-4:15) YEAST DOUGH CHICKEN SIOPAO, FRIED MANTHO, PEANUT BUTTER ROLLED IN BUN
30 (1:30-3:30pm) NEW DISHES: PRESERVED RADISH CRABLET, FRIED BIG INTESTINES, KING FISH IN AMPALAYA, MINCED PORK STEAMED WITH MUY CHOY
Oct. 1 (1:30-3:45pm) TIKOY, RADISH CAKE, SQUASH CAKE
2 (1:30-3:45pm) H.K. STYLE SIOPAO WITH DIFFERENT FILLINGS
3 (1:30-3:30 pm) NEW DISHES: SEAFOOD PUDDING, PATOLA IN STOCK, SEAFOODS FUYONG, TONG KONG BEAN CURD IN HOT POT.
4 (9-11:30 am) DIFFERENT KINDS OF SIOMAI: SHARK'S FIN SIOMAI, BEEF, ORDINARY, SPECIAL SIOMAI

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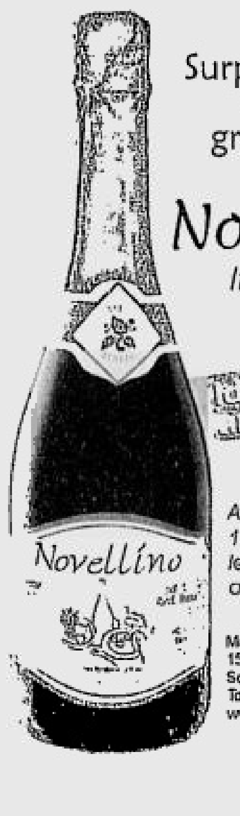

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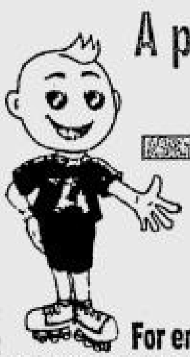

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Pasta Classics: Sept. 27 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Canneloni, assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Puttanesca, Pesto and Negra). Bonus: homemade pasta making P 700.
Baking with Institutional Mixes: Sept. 27 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Food for the Gods, Boat Tarts, Apple Loaf, Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road); Holiday cookies, Crema de Fruta. Bonus: Almond Float P 750.
Bartending Made Easy: Sept. 27 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Classification of wines and spirits, simple garnish, mixing and serving of drinks, alcoholic and non-alcoholic with actual practice. P1,200.
Catering: Oct. 4 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Legal requirements, hygiene & sanitation, food safety standards, portion control, costing and recipe quantification; basic buffet setup and service flow, equipment sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes such as Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All-Meat Paella, Special Fried Rice and Dessert. P 1,500.
Linen Presentation: Oct. 4 (Sat) 3 p.m. - 6 p.m. Learn dozen style of napkin folding and table skirting techniques with actual practice. Free take home materials. P 550.
Pastillas: Oct. 11 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Traditional Pastillas de Leche, No-cook Langka and Mocca Pastillas, assorted Pastillas balls (Ube, Macapuno, Yema); Pulboron varieties: cheese, cookies and cream, pinipig and choco nut. Bonus: costing and packaging. P 800.
Cookies, Bars and Tarts: Oct. 18 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Maple Dates Cookies, Choco Chunks, Molasses, Pineapple Macaroon, Oatmeal, Coconut Chips; Assorted Fruitcake Bars: Dark Fruitcake, Chocolate Fruitcake, Light Fruitcake; Caramel Butter Tarts, Cashew Boat Tarts. P 800.
Japanese Cooking: Oct. 25 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Miso Soup, Mixed Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi; assorted sushi: Kappamaki, Tekamaki, California Maki and Nigiri. P 800.

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON FOR ADULTS. (Pre-registration required)

Cake Decorating (Basic): Sept. 27 & Oct. 4 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lecture-workshop on fundamentals of cake decorating; coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif. Free decorating tips. P 2,000.
Cooking I (Basic): For Messmen, Stewards and Beginners: Sept. 30, Oct. 1,2,3 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes; Techniques of de-boning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing. Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P 2,500.
Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking): For Career Cooks: Sept. 30, Oct. 1,2,3 (T-F) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Coverage: Food hygiene & sanitation, Standard techniques of preparing basic stocks, soups and sauces applicable to 1001 recipes; salads and dressing; main dishes; potato cookery; pasta and rice; techniques of deboning and filleting fish and chicken; use of herbs and spices to cooking; basic garnish for plate and platter presentation. P 3,000.
Baking I (Basic): Oct. 15,16,17 (W-F) 1:30 - 5 p.m. or Oct. 28 & 29 (Tue-Wed) 8:30 am - 2:30 p.m. Techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P 2,000.

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108, or e-mail us at *mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph*

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CEBU Mabs/Riva 231-3254	**PASAY RD** Butchy/Eleanor 887-1335
GREENHILLS Jacqui 726-6505	**PASIG** Kaye/JC 681-5333
H. V. DELA COSTA Carinna 814-0138	**SM NORTH** Ruth/Michelle 929-5429
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Cooking lessons to help you earn this Christmas

WITH THE HELP of The Maya Kitchen Culinary Arts Center, you can learn some new ideas for your giveaways and become an entrepreneur this coming Christmas. If all goes well, you can even do the business for the rest of the year!

On Sept. 27, choose from three classes: Start a catering business with the Pasta Classics course at 9 a.m.-1 p.m and learn how to make pasta meals such as Lasagna, Chicken Canneloni, assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettuccini, Carbonara, Putanesca, Pesto and Negra), as well as homemade pasta-making.

The Baking with Institutional Mixes course is on a later time slot, 1:30-5 p.m. Create delicious desserts like Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Hotdog on Stick, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles.

The Bartending Made Easy class, scheduled at 9 a.m.-4 p.m, offers lessons on the classification of wines and spirits, simple garnish, and mixing and serving of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

For a more in-depth grasp of food business basics, enroll in Maya's certificate courses such as the Cake Decorating (Basic) class on Sept. 27, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m., which covers cake decorating; coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif.

The Cooking I course for Messmen, Stewards and Beginners will be on Sept. 30, Oct. 1-3, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Learn basic food preparation and cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes; techniques in deboning chicken and fish; basic garnishing, as well as actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes.

On the same dates, but at 1:30 -5 p.m., there's the Comprehensive Cooking for Career Cooks class.

The Maya Kitchen is open Tuesday to Saturday at the 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 8921185/5011 local 108 or e-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

Not so well-known Oriental recipes

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

THE MERE mention of Oriental cuisine conjures images of sweet and sour pork, lemon chicken, sukiyaki, tempura and other Eastern favorites. Here we have not-too-popular Oriental recipes that are just as delicious. These are also considered healthy, as they are loaded with ingredients that are low in fat and high in fiber.

Ma Po Bean Curd

¾ c water
1 chicken bouillon cube
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp rice wine
½ tsp white sugar
1 ½ tbsp cornstarch
3 tbsp water
3 tbsp corn oil
¼ kg ground chicken
2 tsp minced ginger
2 tsp pounded garlic
2 tbsp tausi (canned fermented black beans), rinsed and coarsely chopped
2 tbsp chili and garlic sauce
½ kg toho, cut into ½ inch cubes
¾ c finely chopped spring onions
1 tsp sesame oil

Combine the first five ingredients in a bowl. Set aside. Disperse the cornstarch in water and set aside as well.

Heat the oil in a wok. Stir-fry the chicken until it changes color. Add the ginger, garlic, tausi and the chili sauce. Continue to cook until fragrant. Pour in the chicken broth mixture and the bean curd. Allow to come to a boil, then simmer for five minutes, stirring from time to time.

Add the spring onions and the cornstarch solution. Cook until slightly thick. Turn off the heat and stir in the sesame oil. Serve with freshly cooked rice, fried rice noodles (*bihon*) or shredded lettuce leaves.

Vegetable Fried Rice

½ c corn oil
2 tbsp well-pounded garlic
1 c coarsely chopped onions
1 c chopped carrots
1 c string beans sliced diagonally
1 c well-drained canned corn kernels
4 pcs dried shiitake mushrooms, soaked in water to soften, rinsed and sliced into thin strips
6 c cooked rice
2 eggs, beaten
¼ c soy sauce
½ c chopped spring onions or leeks
freshly ground black pepper to taste

Sauté garlic and onions in corn oil. Add the carrots and beans and continue cooking until the beans are done. Pour in the corn, the mushrooms and the rice. Mix until the ingredients are well distributed.

Pour in the eggs and the soy sauce. Continue to mix until blended. Turn off the heat and stir in the spring onions and the pepper.

Thai Style Bean Thread Salad

150 g mung bean noodles (*sotanghon*), soaked in water until soft and boiled until tender (approx. 5 mins)
¼ kg shrimps, peeled, deveined and boiled until just done
¼ kg squid, cleaned, cut into rings and boiled until tender
¼ c coarsely chopped fried peanuts
¼ c wood ear mushroom (*tengang daga*), soaked in water to soften, rinsed, cut into strips and boiled for 5 minutes
¼ c chopped spring onions
½ c coriander or cilantro leaves

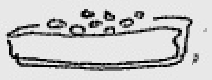
Dressing:
3 tbsp *patis*
3 tbsp white sugar
¼ c calamansi juice
¼ tsp dried chili flakes

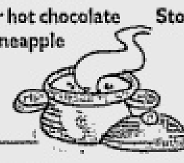
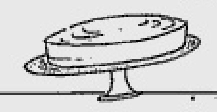
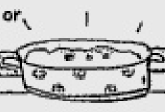
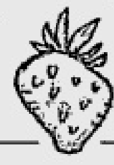
Topping:
bottled fried garlic
sprigs of cilantro/coriander

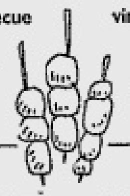
Combine the ingredients for the salad in a mixing bowl. Keep chilled. In another bowl, combine the ingredients for the dressing. Pour over the salad and toss to blend. Top with fried garlic and sprigs of cilantro before serving.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City and at the Julius Maggi Kitchen in Makati. Call 7217735.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	Omelet with onions Hotdog Pandesal Butter or margarine Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	*Pinakbet* Fried fish Rice Papaya	*Misua* soup Chicken *adobo* with pineapple Rice Fruit gelatin
TUESDAY	Sardines sauteed with onions *Monay* Butter and cheddar cheese Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea Papaya with calamansi	Pork *embutido* *Gisadong sitaw* Rice *Minatamis na saging*	Vegetable fried rice *Lumpiang shanghai* Mocha ice cream with coffee jelly
WEDNESDAY	Rice Chicken tocino Coffee or hot chocolate Pineapple	*Sinigang na bangus* Rice Store bought *maja blanca*	Clear soup Ma po bean curd Fried *bihon* *Leche flan*
THURSDAY	Cereal and milk Sweet ham Butter, cottage cheese or fruit jam Loaf bread Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea	Tossed green salad Beef salpicado Rice Fresh fruit platter	*Pancit canton* Fried chicken wings *Mais con hielo*
FRIDAY	Hotcake with butter and maple syrup Crispy bacon Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	Steamed fish Sauted baby bok choy with oyster sauce and garlic Rice Canned fruit cocktail with ice	Lasagna Garlic bread Cheesecake
SATURDAY	Garlic rice Fried egg Corned beef Coffee or hot chocolate *Guyabano*	Thai style bean thread salad Chicken barbecue Rice *Cuchinta*	Clear soup Tossed greens with vinaigrette dressing *Mechado* Rice *Crema de fruta*
SUNDAY	Rice *Daing na bangus* Salted egg and tomato salad Ripe mangoes Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	Baked *tahong* *Callos* Rice Brazo de mercedes	Chicken *tinola* Steamed shrimps Rice Fresh fruit platter





CINNABON offers WOW treats such as Minibon and regular cafe Americano; minichocobon and cappuccino; Cinnabon classic and regular cafe Americano; minibon and iced tea; minichocobon and lemonade; and Cinnabon classic and lemonade.

Aussie cuisine at Shangri-La, Visayan menu at Manila Pavilion

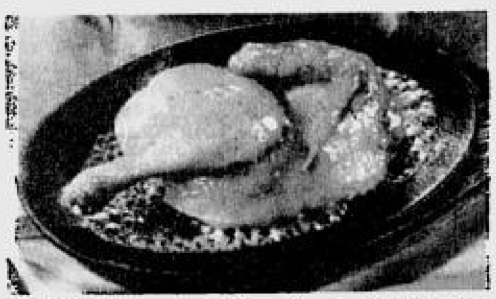
From page D4

fillable glass of any Coca-Cola product to match your favorite CPK dish. CPK has outlets in Tomas Morato, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Glorietta 3 Makati and Alabang Town Center.

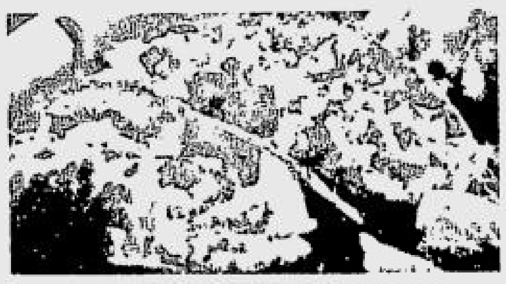
JADE GARDEN celebrates its 23rd anniversary with a specially priced lunch set menu called "A Low-Riat Feat for 10" until Oct. 10. For P1,680 + per set (good for 10 persons), the laurial consists of winter melon soup with straw mushrooms, fu yung, deep fried spring rolls, sweet and sour pork braised beancurd in hot casserole, seasonal vegetables with oyster sauce, Yang Chow fried rice and sweet dim sum pastries for dessert. Jade Garden is at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati City, with tels. 8922319/8124548.

HOLIDAY Inn Resort Clark Field in Pampanga presents Tsibugan at Sayawan sa Parade Ground on Oct. 11, 5 p.m.-3 a.m., at Clark Special Economic Zone Parade Ground. Call 8451888/(045) 5998000.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel, the Department of Tourism Region VIII and WOW Philippines present "Pangaon Kita" Eastern Visayas Food Festival until Sept. 27 at Café Coquilla. Call 5261212.



MAX'S Restaurant offers Sizzling Sweet and Spicy Chicken with sweet and spicy sauce, served in melted butter.



DEEP-FRIED and delicious Mahi-Mahi fillet, chunky salsa and shredded cabbage wrapped in a soft corn tortilla with salsa guacamolé and sour cream. At Tequila Joe's at El Pueblo in Ortigas (tel. 6363572) or Glorietta in Makati (tel. 8120444).

SIZZLER launches "Ahhh, Sinigang! (Iba't-ibang Asim)" featuring six *sinigang* variations that include Sinigang na Sugpo sa Sampalok, Ulo ng Salmon sa Miso with calamansi, Sinigang na Tanigue sa Santol, Sinigang na Bangus (boneless) sa Bayabas, Sinigang na Tiyan ng Tuna sa Kamias, and Blue Marlin Sinigang sa Mangga. Each order comes with rice. Sizzler is at 2/L, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati and Greenhills Shopping Center (beside Kimpura), San Juan.

Promo raffle gimmick becoming scarier

THE CONSUMER
Mariella Velasco Giron

SOMETHING has to be done about this instant scratch raffles that entice unwary shoppers to try their luck. Winners themselves report that they invariably end up in the sales office of the raffle organizer and tricked into buying items. The raffle organizers claim they don't violate the law because the winners accept the rules and sign sales agreements.

Even the Department of Trade and Industry doesn't seem to find anything illegal in the sales gimmick, hence it persists despite complaints of harassment, fraud and extortion. It is high time shopping malls ban this kind of sales gimmick to protect shoppers that patronize their stores.

Here's one more story. This time, the modus operandi is worse and the perpetrators have become even more daring and aggressive. Janet Uy (not her real name) recounted the following experience:

She was in the Ever Gotesco Complex when a woman approached her and asked her to try her luck at the instant scratch promo of an electronic appliance store. As usually the case pattern, Uy won in the raffle. She was brought to the office of the appliance store supposedly to see the prize she won.

Everybody in the office greeted her exuberantly on her good fortune. They encouraged her to try her luck on a second raffle, which she won again. The prize was a set of electronic items worth P65,000.

Uy relates the rest of her unforgettable story: "That was when they dropped the bombshell. I was told I had to pay P23,500 otherwise I don't get anything. I told them I didn't have that much money but they didn't let me go. In the midst of blaring music, they pressured me into buying the items. They also bombarded me with questions such as how much money I had, what credit cards I had with me, etc."

To make the story short, Uy eventually agreed to deposit P2,000 and return with the balance to get the items she "won." Obviously dazed or scared, she agreed to sign a sales agreement. "They also took P750 from me to treat themselves to a snack," she recounted.

She sent us a copy of a letter addressed to the customer relations representative of the electronics appliance store requesting the following: cancellation of the sales agreement she signed, as well as refund of the P2,000 deposit and P750, which the office personnel took from her for their *merienda*.

Smoking ordinance

Here's a letter from Mayor Jejomar Binay about the anti-smoking ordinance in Makati City:

"Contrary to what dissenters (of the smoking restrictions) seem bent on making the public believe, our anti-smoking ordinance is actually parallel to the general provisions of the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003, or R.A. (Republic Act) 92112. Just like the national law, our ordinance allows establishments with adequate space to designate a smoking area, as long as these fully comply with all structural and ventilation standards, including solid, floor-to-ceiling partitions and effective exhaust systems.

"Moreover, our ordinance imposes the absolute smoking ban on all forms of public transport, as well as all government offices, schools in all levels, hospitals and medical clinics, and all enclosed public places covering an area of less than 100 square meters.

"Our consistent response to our critics, who are, in effect, opposed to the national law itself, is that the long term and extensive health benefits of these laws far outweigh their concerns... And to smokers who feel we are infringing on their freedom of choice, we say that such freedom ends where the basic right of other people to clean, smoke-free air begins."

Feedback

From callcenter@skycable comes this clarification: "The authorized and subsidized length of cable line that connects the subscriber's cable TV unit to the electric post on the street is 120 feet (not 120 meters as we were informed). In excess of 120 feet up to a maximum of 230, the subscriber has to pay P15 per foot. Beyond 230 feet, the television reception may be weak and blurred."

Eileen B. Rosetes of Buy'n Text sends this added information in connection with the query of Chic (chic_snuffles@yahoo.com) published in this column last Sept. 18: Winners of Buy'n Text draws were Rimus Asperin of La Union (June draw) and Generoso Fernandes of Parañaque (July). Name of August winner is on hold pending completion of verification.

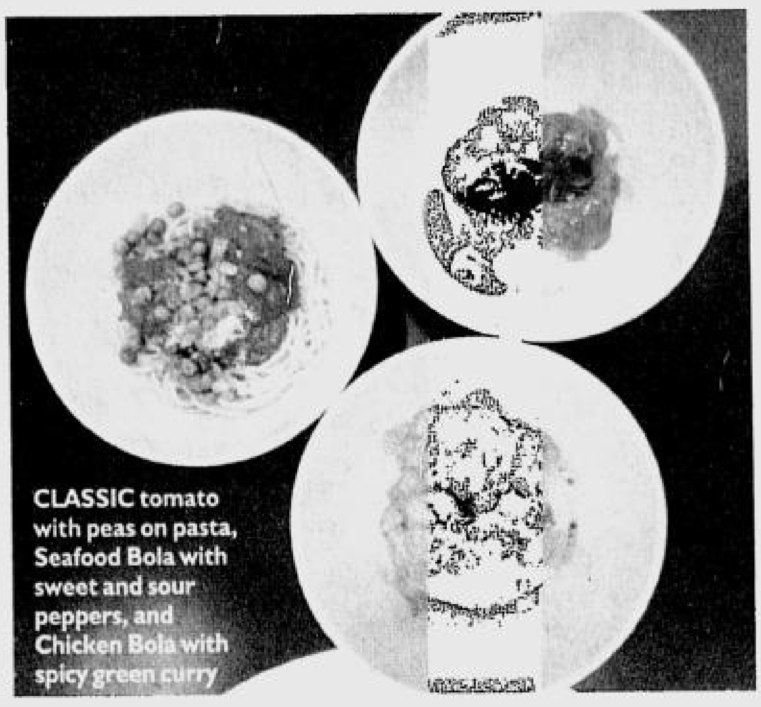
Rosetes explained the basic verification procedures prior to the official announcement of winners. "In the traditional raffle, the consumer encloses proof of purchase in a white envelope that can be verified right away upon the draw date. But in any text raffle, the consumer keeps the proof of purchase (after texting the code), and is required to show it only when his or her name is drawn as potential winner.

"In the case of Buy'n Text, a verification team with a representative from the Department of Trade and Industry will be sent to the potential winner to authenticate the winning code. Affiliations of the potential winner will also be verified with all our partner companies before she or he is declared official winner. To comply with DTI regulations, we disqualify relatives (up to the third degree) of any employee or official of all the companies and agencies who are partners in the promo game." For more details, call 7461129 or write to customerservice@buyntext.com

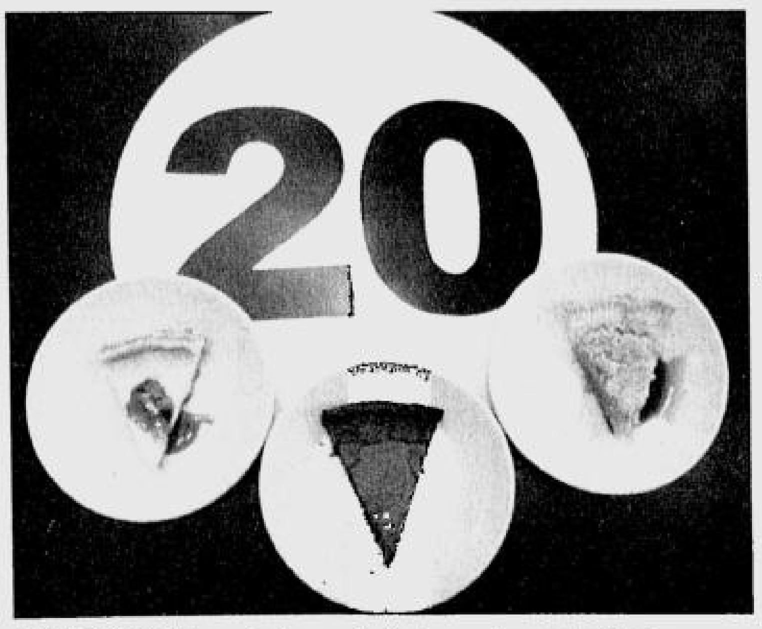
Consumer says thanks

We appreciate the prompt response of the following company officials to complaints referred to them. Thanks to Horace Lavides, PLDT senior manager, media services division; and Jeanette Ng-Lim, Citibank's manager for public relations, communications and marketing.

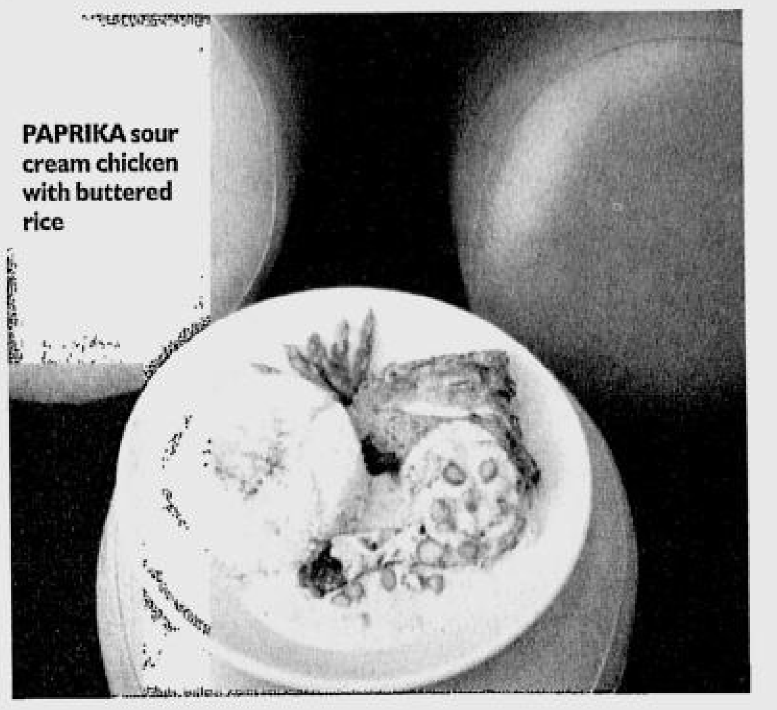
E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph



CLASSIC tomato with peas on pasta, Seafood Bola with sweet and sour peppers, and Chicken Bola with spicy green curry



BEST-SELLING desserts *kesong puti* cheesecake, warm flourless chocolate cake and *saba-nana* pie



PAPRIKA sour cream chicken with buttered rice

Comfort café

From page D1

Fores is the least bit surprised at such a huge turnout, considering that Café Bola opened a little more than a month ago. The restaurant's food, she says, is designed to chase those rainy-day blues away—like the lowly *tuyo* and *danggit*, arguably two of the most sought-after rainy-day staples, right up there with *kamatis at itlog na maalat, ginisang mongo, sinigang na hipon* and *binagoongang baboy.*

"Comfort food is food that reminds us of [what we ate in] our youth," says Fores. "In my case, it was home-cooked emergency food that included *de lata* cooking."

Lim, in contrast, grew up with his mom's version of comfort food, consisting of rice topped with various kinds of meatballs. This explains the name Café Bola, the first outlet of which opened at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao a few years ago.

Lim's mom is former actress and LVN contract star Emma Alegre, who starred opposite Rogelio de la Rosa, Jaime de la Rosa, Armando Goyena and Carlos Padilla, among other actors. Alegre, who's now based in the United States, quit show biz in the late 1950s after she got married.

But Alegre's movie-star looks live on in her black-and-white movie stills and magazine covers, which provide a perfect foil to Café Bola's brightly colored and geometric interiors designed by George Yulo. Fores and Lim had the photos scanned, blown up and mounted on plastic sheets.

"While our first outlet at the Araneta Center features pictures of the coliseum's early years—from its construction to its completion," says Fores, "we decided to feature pictures of Alvin's mom in the new outlet."

Several plastic chairs in tangerine with black metal legs add to the café's sense of nostalgia. These are the very chairs found outside the doctors' offices at the Makati Medical Center before Fores was able to convince her father to part with them. Dad, of course, is Dr. Raul Fores, medical director of the hospital. After getting the chairs, she promptly replaced them with new, generic-looking ones of similar color.

"The chairs, which dad had sourced from Clark Air Base decades ago, give the café a vintage feel," says Fores. "They don't make chairs like these anymore. I love them and the way they impart the place with a cafeteria look."

(clockwise from top) **SIRLOIN** tapa with egg on rice, spicy tuyo fillets on rice with scrambled egg and wansoy salsa, and adobo flakes with egg on rice

BOLA sandwich

Sweeter

Although such rainy-day busters as *sinigang* and *binagoongang baboy* have yet to make it to Café Bola's menu, Fores and Lim have whipped up such dishes as spicy *tuyo* fillets on rice with scrambled egg and wanton salsa and *dulong* in creamy garlic sauce, tomato sauce and *danggit* crackle.

For starters, guests can either savor the spicy *bangus* mousse with *pandesal* rounds—milkfish paté if you wish—or the crisp swamp cabbage (*kangkong* for you and me) and cheddar dip with *pandesal* rounds.

Café Bola also has pasta dishes aplenty. But unlike Cibo, another restaurant chain run separately by the petite yet indefatigable Fores, Café Bola's pasta dishes have been adjusted to the Filipino palate. For one, Fores puts more onions to the sauce to make it a tad sweeter.

The penne in chorizo and parmesan cream and the sinfully creamy spaghetti with baby crab fat (*taba ng talangka*), fish roe and asparagus are among Café Bola's best-selling pasta dishes. But don't worry, there are healthy tomato-based alternatives with white cheese, basil, or tuna and olives for spaghetti lovers.

Fores takes care of the hot dishes, while Lim is in charge of the dessert and other baked items. Baking, says Fores, requires precision, that's why she leaves it all up to the equally patient but more meticulous and hands-on Lim.

"That's why I insisted on a big kitchen," says the soft-spoken Lim. Instead of sourcing the breads and other baked goodies from their central kitchen in Cubao, Lim plans to bake them within the Greenbelt outlet.

Ideal

The café's warm flourless chocolate cake in vanilla sauce, which is chewy and creamy but far from sweet, is an ideal way to cap a hearty meal of either *adobo* flakes with *kesong puti* or the paprika sour cream chicken with buttered rice, the first-ever dish the intrepid Fores experimented with as a teenager.

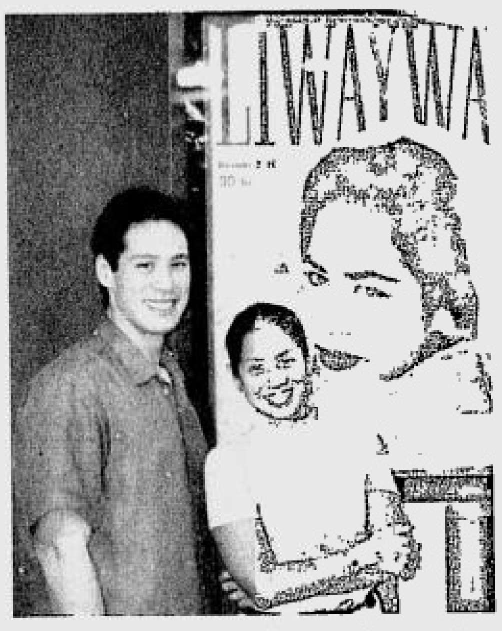
"I learned to cook the dish from an American cookbook," she says with a hearty laugh.

Café Bola also boasts of such homemade quality desserts as *saba-nana* pie (made from *saging na saba*), classic tiramisu, Bola flan and a variation of the traditional cheesecake using *kesong puti*.

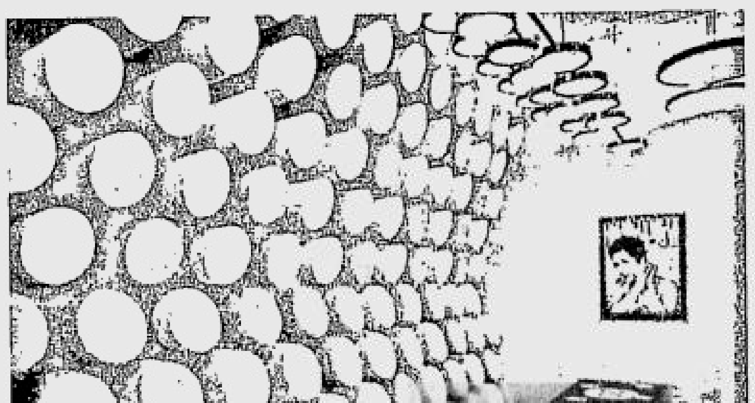
If there's such a thing as a comfort drink, anyone of these Bola concoctions derived from *kamias*, chico, pomelo, jackfruit and pears can qualify.

"Café Bola was born out of Alvin's and my love for American diner food," explains Fores. "This is our version of a Filipino diner where customers can get good, decent meals at very affordable prices." And that's no *bola* (empty talk)!

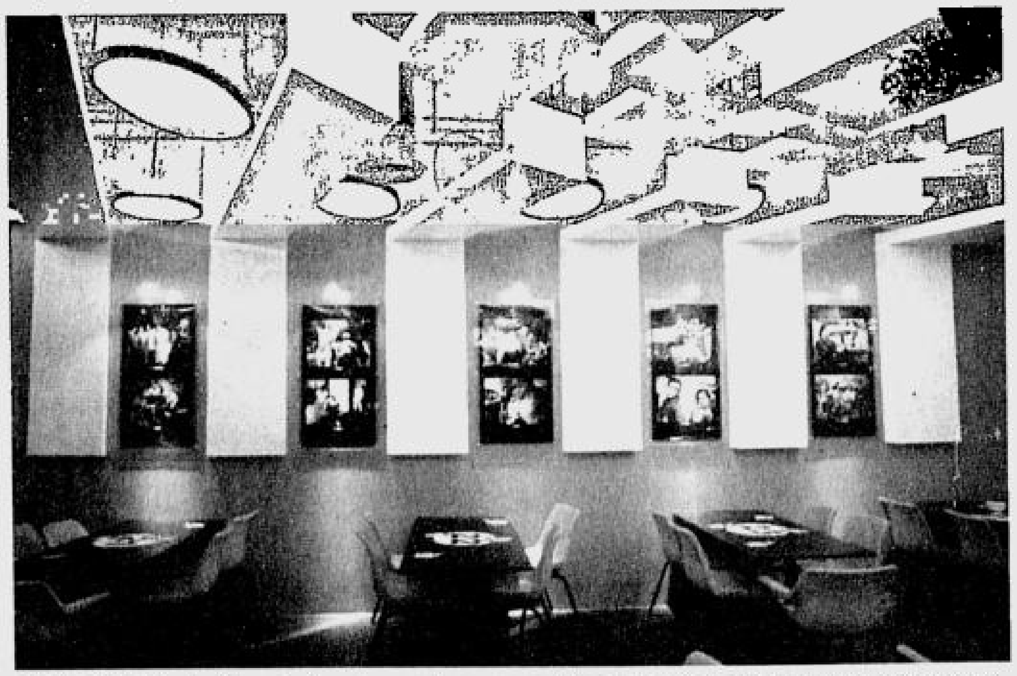
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



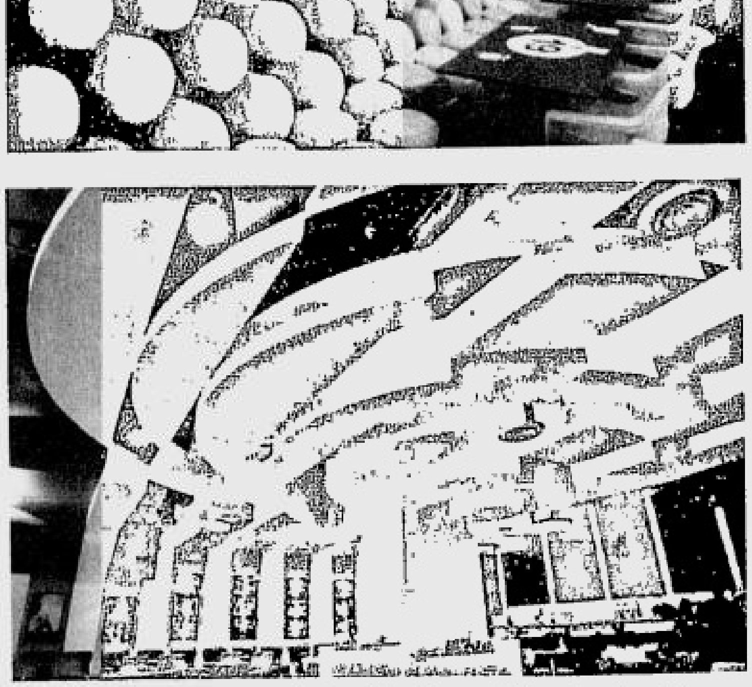
BACK IN TIME. Margarita "Gaita" Fores and Alvin Lim before a blown-up magazine cover featuring Emma Alegre, Alvin's mom



PROTRUDING wall accents in red, orange and yellow



CAFETERIA feel with retro touches such as geometric elements and blown-up movie stills of Emma Alegre's films



CAFÉ Bola's interior was designed by George Yulo, who also did Pepato, Fores' high-end resto.

Eating right begins at home

TO help busy homemakers, the San Miguel Great Food Club recently hosted a cooking show at the Valle Verde Country Club with the theme "Nutri-diets: Nutritiously Sound and New Treats to Savor."

San Miguel Purefoods culinary services manager Helene Pontejos gave a talk on "fad diets," after which the audience was treated to healthful gastronomic delights from two of the country's top culinary experts, chef Joey Prats and Jane Paredes.

When parents do not take the time and initiative to serve nutritious meals, their kids do not develop healthy eating habits. And when the children put on a lot of weight from all that unhealthy eating, they take drastic steps like subscribing to harmful fad diets, expecting to lose weight right the next day.

"Any diet that promotes instant weight loss through an unbalanced food intake is unhealthy," Pontejos clarified. "For example, popular fad diets such as the High Protein Diet or Cabbage Soup completely eliminate certain food groups that the body needs to function well."

Most people think having a small budget prevents them from eating right. Nutri-diet best suits everyone since this program is really about eating food that is right for the body and is priced just right. Pontejos said Pinoy homemakers "should be guided by the Food Pyramid as an easy-to-follow guide for planning a balance diet for the whole family. It will make us aware of the wide range of choices within each food group that equally contribute the same nutrients within our food budget."

Information campaigns in schools and health centers, on newspapers, and free-admission culinary symposia like the ones the San Miguel Food Group organizes help educate the public about proper, inexpensive and balanced menu planning.

"Cheese is yummy, yet it is high in protein and calcium. Carrots, which are high in Vitamin A, are good especially when served as a snack for children who just love munching on crunchy finger food. It can even be made more appetizing when served with a cheese dip. Spinach can be irresistible when used as an ingredient for lasagna, an instant hit among children and teenagers. Kangkong can be steamed and tossed with oyster sauce and topped with crunchy garlic, a dish that is very popular in restaurants but can easily be prepared at home, making it an instant hit for all members of the family. Stews are complete one-dish meals, with protein from meat combined with the vitamins and minerals from carrots and other vegetables together with carbohydrates from potatoes."

The San Miguel Culinary Center always makes it a point to consider good nutrition aside from flavor and eye appeal when developing recipes for its consumers. Its kitchen-tested recipes use only quality ingredients from superior brands such as Monterey, Magnolia and Purefoods-Hormel.

"Parents should serve as good examples to their children by eating nutritious food themselves," said Pontejos. "Whatever children learn in their early years will have a lasting effect on their food choices as adults."

Aussie cuisine at Shangri-La, Visayan menu at Manila Pavilion

DINING OUT

CRAVINGS will serve all the soup and salad you want the entire October—salads of organic lettuce, eggplant, baby corn, basil, arugula, curly endives, romaine lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, cheeses, bacon, eggs, and choices of dressings and two varieties. Call 4264838 or visit www.cravingsgroup.com

EDSA Shangri-La's Garden Café features an Australian buffet of Aussie meat pie, clay-baked chicken with honey and lavender, pan-fried barramundi, Tasmanian oysters, kangaroo prosciutto, yabbies and shrimps. Promo is ongoing until Sept. 28. Call 6347373 or 6338888.

LE SOUFFLÉ will feature a special set menu for lunch and dinner in October. On Oct. 4, its 12th anniversary, it will offer Le Soufflé classics. Call Le Soufflé Bistro at 6361613/14 or 6348971; Le Soufflé The Fort, 8875108 to 09; and Top of the Citi, 7505810 to 11.

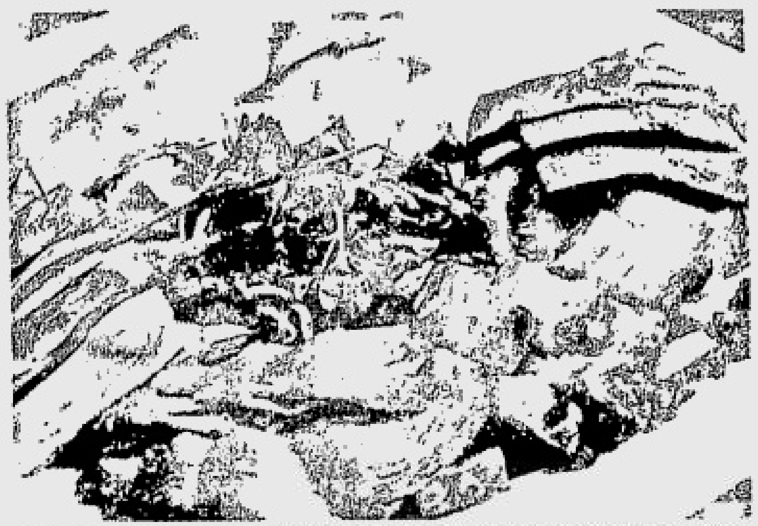
RESTAURANT 12 presents Le Parfum du Maroc. Savor the flavors of Morocco as created by guest chef Debby Enriquez. The promo is ongoing until Sept. 27. Call 7574568.

BENNIGAN'S Café and Bar offers American and Filipino dishes like Monte Cristo, Bennigan's Best Sampler, Dubliner, Death by Chocolate, White Chocolate Chill-Out, Mango Cod Fish Salad, Sausage Herb Pasta, Oriental Pork Steak Chops, Oriental Chicken Chops, Sizzling Squid and Sizzling Gambas. Bennigan's is located at 190 Tomas Morato corner Scout Gandia, QC.

SUPER Bowl of China presents 12 kinds of dim sum such as fresh shrimp dumpling, steamed pork siu mai, steamed pork ribs with taosi sauce, pan-fried meat bun, BBQ pork siu pao, steamed polonchay and shrimp dumpling, chicken feet with taro, vegetarian spring roll, deep-fried wanton, deep-fried sesame prawn toast, pan-fried Shanghai dumpling, steamed machang, pan-fried bean curd skin roll and pan-fried Chung-fun with sesame sauce. Super Bowl has outlets at Megastrip in Megamall, Jupiter Street, Makati and Glorietta 4. Call 7378888.

CALIFORNIA Pizza Kitchen offers the CPK VIP card which gives diners 10-percent discount on your total bill. Or refresh yourself to a free re

AUSSIE/ D2



SMART Panciteria presents Chinese dishes like Smart Chicken, Fried Frog Legs, Kangkong Lechon, Lettuce with Minced Meat and Soup No. 5. The restaurant is located at 106 E. Rodriguez Avenue, QC. Call 3955147/5170.

KIMPURA launches "5 Please! Bento Lunch Treat" promo this month. From Monday to Saturday, dine-in customers may order five different bento lunch sets, and the lowest-priced set ordered is free. Kimpura is located at 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (tels. 8932307/8924456) and Greenhills Shopping Center (beside Uni-Mart), San Juan (tels. 7218816/69).

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